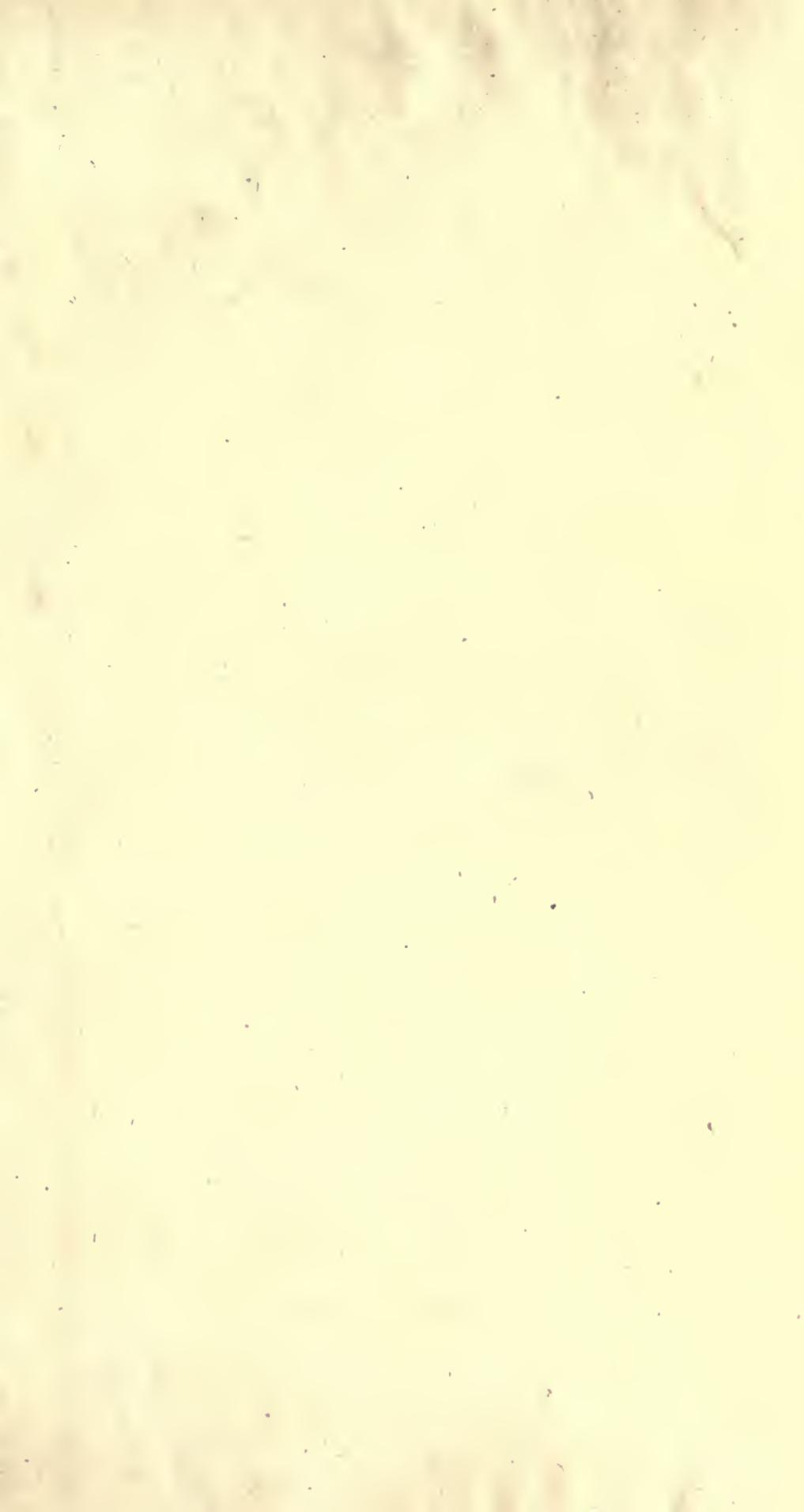
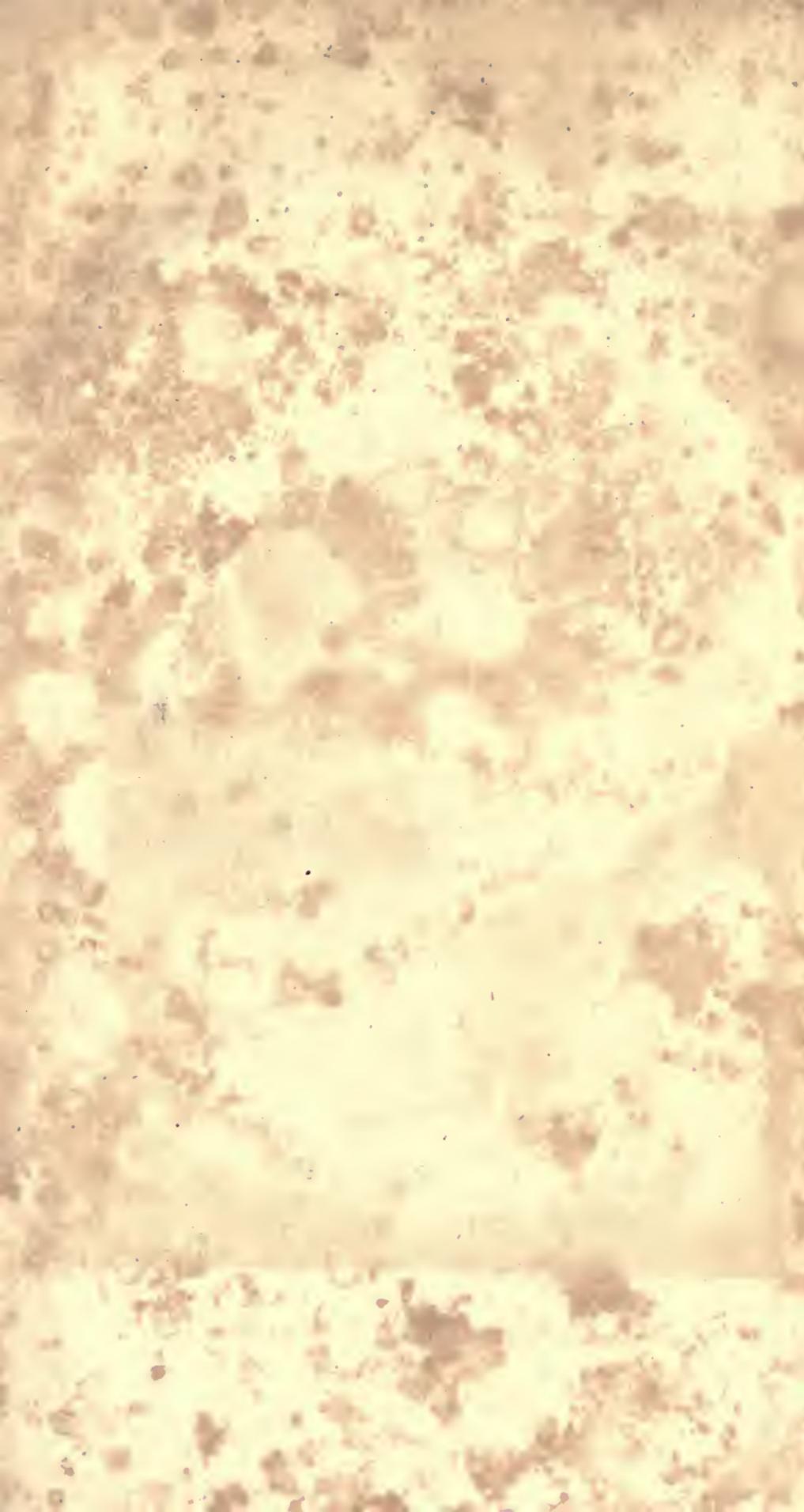


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VIEW of the SEPULCHRE of CECILIA METELLA

THE HISTORY OF TUSCANY,
FROM THE EARLIEST ERA; COMPRISING
AN ACCOUNT OF THE
REVIVAL OF LETTERS, SCIENCES, AND ARTS,
INTERSPERSED WITH ESSAYS ON IMPORTANT LITERARY AND
HISTORICAL SUBJECTS; INCLUDING
MEMOIRS OF THE FAMILY OF THE MEDICI.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ITALIAN OF
LORENZO PIGNOTTI, ROYAL AND GRAND DUCAL HISTORIOGRAPHER, ETC.
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DEPUTY PURVEYOR OF THE FORCES; SEVERAL YEARS RESIDENT
IN FLORENCE.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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HISTORY OF TUSCANY.

CHAPTER I.

THE FLORENTINES ELECT PETER SODERINI GONFALONIERE FOR LIFE.—UNION OF THE ITALIAN LEADERS AGAINST VALENTINO.—INVADES THE STATES OF SIENNA.—PETRUCCI LEAVES THAT CITY.—PROSECUTION OF THE WAR WITH PISA.—THE FRENCH MARCH AGAINST CONSALVO.—CELEBRATED CHALLENGE BETWEEN THE ITALIANS AND FRENCH.—DEATH OF POPE ALEXANDER.—THE CARDINAL ROVERE IS RECONCILED WITH VALENTINE, AND PROCLAIMED POPE, AND TAKES THE NAME OF JULIUS II.—VALENTINE IS BETRAYED BY CONSALVO.—HIS END.—DEFEAT OF THE FRENCH AT GARIGLIANO.—DEATH OF PETER DE MEDICIS.—PEACE BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND SPANIARDS.—THE THRONE OF NAPLES GIVEN TO FERDINAND OF ARRAGON.—HIS MEETING IN GENOA WITH THE KING OF FRANCE.—DISGRACE OF CONSALVO.—SURRENDER OF PISA.—LEAGUE OF CAMBRAI.—CARDINAL JOHN MEDICIS CREATED LEGATE IN LA ROMAGNA.—LEAGUE AGAINST THE FRENCH.—VALOUR AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF GASTON DE FOIS.—HORRIBLE PILLAGE OF BRESCIA.—CELEBRATED BATTLE OF RAVENNA.—DEATH OF GASTON DE FOIS.—IMPRISONMENT OF THE CARDINAL OF THE MEDICIS.—AGREEMENT AMONGST THE ALLIES TO RESTORE THE MEDICIS TO FLORENCE.—ASSAULT AND TAKING OF PRATO.—RETURN OF THE MEDICIS WITH GREATER AUTHORITY.

THE government of the republic of Florence, notwithstanding the fall of Savonarola, continued the ^{1502.} same, almost without any alteration. The greater

council still consisted of 1,500, and even 2,000 citizens who had a seat in it: nor had the oligarchs ever succeeded in bringing back the power into the hands of the few, as in the time of the Medicis. In vain, three years previous, they made an attempt at it, by electing Bernard Rucellai gonfaloniere, who, being either too wise, or too cautious, and not presenting himself at the palace in the time prefixed by the laws, under pretext of sickness, excluded himself voluntarily from the office. Guido Anthony Vespucci was substituted for him, a more courageous man, who, either artfully, or because circumstances demanded it, having made various propositions, not one of which was accepted, and seeing the council discontented and agitated, took upon him to say, in a whisper, that, if they were not satisfied with the present government, they might give the signiory to understand it, and they would be attended to; but these broken words excited so much tumult against the gonfaloniere, that it became necessary to dissolve the council, and Vespucci was exposed to various insults*.

After this useless attempt, the government had remained constant to its usual form, until the present time, when it underwent an important change. The first magistrate of the republic, the gonfaloniere, had a great part of the executive power in his hands: they changed every two months, and, after a long experience, the citizens must have perceived the evils of so hasty a variation, since the enterprises undertaken, and provisions made, by the one, might displease the other, and, either from envy or ignorance, prove of no avail. Either from this reason, or from the continually-increasing dangers to which the

* Amongst other insults, various halters were hung at the bars of his ground-floor windows. Nardi, lib. 3.

republic was exposed, they determined upon creating *one gonfaloniere*, or chief magistrate, for life, and thus, in order to avoid one extreme, they ran into another, more dangerous than the first: since nothing is more easy for a cunning and daring man, in the long exercise of so important an office, than to enslave his country. Fortunately, the choice fell upon Peter Soderini, a man of the greatest probity, but of mediocrity of talents, who, having no children, could give no umbrage, from entertaining views of establishing his own family*.

The cruel treacheries employed by Valentine had scattered terror amongst all the little princes of Italy, against whose states his perfidious ambition was particularly directed, and which were extinguished one after the other, either by force of arms, or by fraud. The others began, as we have already mentioned, to dread the same fate. Vitellozzo, the Orsini, John Paul Baglioni, Oliverotto of Fermo, and the agents of Petrucci and Bentivoglio, held a congress at the Magione, not far from Perugia, to concert measures for opposing this tyrant, and invited the Florentines to enter the alliance, who refused from the dictates of prudence, in order not to disgust France, with which power the duke was too firmly allied.

These brave leaders, however, began the war with success, routed the troops of Valentine, and, after taking various cities, replaced the Duke Guidubaldo in Urbino. But, although the perfidious character of that man was consummate and well known to the public, from the many proofs he had given of it, we must allow that the artifice he employed was still greater, since he succeeded in reconciling them with him, and even making himself

* Buonacc. Diar. Nardi, Ist. lib. 4. Ammir. lib. 28.

believed sincere. Alliances, in fact, are not wont to be stable, as each thinks of his own interest; it was no wonder, therefore, that the conspiracy against Valentine was not maintained firmly, the more so, as the King of France had commanded his generals to support the duke, but that the former should suffer themselves to be taken in the net, notwithstanding the well-known character of that prince, is indeed strange. They could not, however, be put to death one by one, as the first blow would have placed the rest on their guard. By such artful caresses did Valentine lull their suspicions to rest, that thinking his reconciliation sincere, they went to meet him, with a few people, at Sinigaglia. There Paul Orsini, the Duke of Gravina, Oliverotto of Fermo, Vitellozzo, and Ludowic of Sodi were arrested, and Oliverotto and Vitellozzo immediately strangled. Shortly afterwards the pope caused the Cardinal Orsini, and many other respectable persons, to be arrested in Rome, and a cardinal, so venerable for his age, and respectable on account of his family, soon finished his days, probably by poison: at the news of which, Valentine, in order to make the tragedy complete, caused the two

^{1503.} Orsini, Paul, and the Duke of Gravina, to be strangled. On account of these infamies, which the duke affirmed were necessary for the Florentine republic, saying, that he had taken revenge for her for the treachery practised by Vitellozzo, the latter sent him ambassadors of congratulation*. Wishing to enjoy the fruits of his wickedness, he occupied the city of Castello, whence the Vitelli had escaped, and afterwards Perugia, from which John Paul Baglione had fled, under the

* Buonacc. Diar. Guicciar. Ist. lib. 5. Amm. lib. 28. Above all, see Macchiavel, who was with Valentine, and who relates the method he followed.

pretext that it was part of the territory of the church; threatening even Sienna, and demanding that Pandolph Petrucci should be expelled therefrom, whom he called the disturber of the peace of Tuscany.

For some years this man had been the regulator of the republic of Sienna. In the authority that ruled her, every one turned to him in any difficult deliberation; by his prudence and sense he had well earned the credit he enjoyed in Tuscany*. Valentine approached the states of Sienna, threatening them with invasion, if Petrucci was not expelled; and, as the government somewhat hesitated in coming to a determination, he, in fact, invaded the territory, by occupying Sarteano and other places. Petrucci, in order to remove from that tyrant every pretext of doing harm to his native country, left Sienna, directing himself towards Lucca, where, in order to draw him into the trap, the duke himself had written urgent letters that he might be well received. But Petrucci was saved by his good fortune. That infamous man, after having agreed in Pienza, with the Siennese ambassadors, to let him have a safe pass from the Florentines†, sent immediately fifty horsemen to Lucca, to put him to death, which would have happened, had the captain of the Florentines, who was at Cascina, not arrested them, not thinking himself justified, during a time of war with Pisa, to let them pass without permission of the signiory. Petrucci, taking warning from this delay, fled to Pisa‡.

The Florentines, growing still more suspicious of Valentine, who, by directing his views towards Sienna and

* Malevolti, History of Sienna, book 6th of the 3rd part.

† Buonacc. Diar. Nardi Ist. lib. 4, says that the passport was sent immediately.

‡ Malevolti, loc. cit. Buonac. Diar. Nardi Ist.

HISTORY OF TUSCANY.

Pisa would, if his designs had succeeded, have embroiled the republic (as the pope openly declared Pisa to have been granted him by the emperor), ordered their ambassador Salviati to remind the King of France that the excessive aggrandizement of this man from the ruin of the many, might also one day prove prejudicial to the French. Nor were these representations useless. The king sent Francis Candulo express to the magistracy of Sienna, to demand that Petrucci should be recalled. The Siennese at first hesitated, on account of the vicinity of the troops of Valentine, to whom, however, they caused the peremptory demands of the king to be made known. He conceded in anger, and Petrucci was recalled by a public decree*.

The hostilities the Florentines were engaged in against Pisa, were prosecuted but slowly; and the war was reduced to mere depredations of the country. In order to avoid this misfortune, rather than from any desire of adjustment, a friar was sent from Pisa as ambassador to the viceroy of Milan, and afterwards to the king himself, that he might choose to become mediator, but the Florentines, getting acquainted with the pretext, defeated the end of every device. The Pisans, however, received some succours of men and money from the Lucchese, Genoese, and Siennese; the former held Pietra Santa and Mutrone, the second Sarzana, and Sarzanello, the latter Montepulciano: and as long as the Florentines were implicated in the war with Pisa, they enjoyed those acquisitions more securely.

The Florentines had received reinforcements with the Bali or ruler of Occan, with which they began to act with more vigour. Marching 300 men of arms, 200

* Bonac. Diar. Nardi, Ist. lib. 4. Mal. loc. cit.

light horse, and 3,000 infantry, under the command of that captain, they regained Vicopisano: Verrucola, an important fortress was afterwards attacked and conquered, because, from the summit of that mountain, which was opportunely situate and dominated two vast plains, they made signs agreed upon, whereby the Pisans got advice of the movements of the Florentines. The latter having taken it, fortified it in a manner to render it invincible*. They were hoping to make greater progress, when the Bali was recalled by the Lord of Tramoglia, who was going with the royal army into the kingdom of Naples to fight against the Spaniards.

What every politician of mediocre talents might have foreseen soon took place: the division made of the kingdom of Naples by two powerful Kings kindled a war between them. From that moment Italy no longer enjoyed peace, until a proper sovereign was established: Lombardy and Naples were continually occupied, lost, and regained by turns by foreign powers, and the whole of Italy so frequently traversed by rival armies, has been almost always exposed to the scourge of war. The French were superior in troops: but the wonderful tactics employed by Gonsalvo made amends for the inferiority of number of the Spaniards, whereby sustaining the attacks of, and exhausting the French impetuosity, he made the finest defence of Barletta, under which the enemy were consuming themselves slowly. During the siege of that place, the celebrated challenge took place between the Italians and the French, in order to support the honour of their nations. The former, irritated by dishonourable words made use of by the Frenchman, Lamotte, sent a solemn challenge to the latter:

* Bonacc. Diar. Nardi, lib. Ist. Ammir. lib. 28.

thirteen were chosen on a side; they fought in sight of the two armies and the Italians came off conquerors *.

Finally, in this year, on the 18th August, the death of Alexander VI. removed from the face of the earth, a man who dishonoured the human species, as well as the luminous and venerable post he occupied. The report of his death is various. The narration of many historians of that age, and particularly Guicciardini would deserve to be considered most authentic, who relates that the pope and his son, by a mistake of the servants, drank the poison the latter had prepared for some rich cardinals, who were to sup together in the villa of the Cardinal of Corneto: that the pope, being an old man, died from the effects of it, but the duke, although seriously ill, escaped through his juvenile robustness †, but died probably of a malignant ague, a very frequent disease during the summer at Rome ‡.

* The detail of this interesting event may be read at length in Guicciardini's history, and in Giovio, who give the names and the native province or town of the Italians. Giovio relates that the celebrated poet Vida, had written an elegant little Latin poem upon this fact which proved so honourable to the Italian nation: but it has not been found. He had thought it might have remained concealed in some Roman library: the very diligent Abbé Serassi, at my request, had long sought for it in vain before his death. The dispute between the Italians and French is related by Giovio as we have mentioned: Guicciardini differs upon some points.

† Guicciard. Ist. lib. 6. Jov. Life Consal. Bemb. Hist. Volater.

‡ Muratori in the annals of Italy, on the diary mentioned by Rainaldo, with the accounts of Alexander Sardi, which are preserved manuscript in the Estensan library, sufficiently proves the disease of the pope to have been intermittent fever. It might, however, be true that Valentine was poisoned at that supper, at which the pope probably was not present, by the poison given him in mistake which had been prepared for the Cardinal of Corneto, since the above-mentioned cardinal confessed to Giovio that he had been poisoned in that

The death of the pope could not strike Valentine at a more unlucky moment. He was seriously ill when he stood most in need of the powers both of body and mind. He, however, lost not his courage even in that condition. Calling his troops together, he had strength sufficient to resist the Roman barons, who, rising at the news of the death of the pope, were panting for vengeance, and Rome was about to become the theatre of a civil war, had not mediators prevented it. Valentine and his enemies agreed to quit Rome with the liberty of the conclave, in which the Cardinal Piccolomini was chosen Pope on the 22nd September under the name of Pius III., a man of a holy life, but already infirm, and whose reign exceeded not one month. Valentine, returning, found a party amongst the cardinals sufficiently strong to give him considerable influence in the new election. The ambitious Cardinal Rovere wished to profit of it, and reconciling himself with Valentine under promise of defending him and his states, the party of the duke so preponderant, was so much in favour of him that he was proclaimed pope before the conclave was over, on the first day of November*. He was the nephew of Sixtus IV., and a man of a strong character, who, exposed for a long time to the persecutions of Alexander VI., and familiarized with the court of Charles VIII. and Louis XII., had become a veteran in the art of politics.

The Florentines sent him ambassadors, who, after the usual formalities were over, insinuated to him how dangerous his situation was, relating to him that he felt his bowels afterwards inflamed by an indescribable heat; that he lost his senses and reason, and the skin came off him. It is certain that the duke at the death of the pope was extremely ill.

* Guicciard. History, Book 6.

gerous it was to let the Venetians aggrandize themselves too greatly, who, profiting of the death of Alexander, and the critical circumstances in which Valentine was placed, had occupied Faenza and the Valley of Lamone, (Val di Lamone), and were become dangerous neighbours, both to the states of the pontiff and the Florentine republic. The pope had little need of such warnings, as he was full of zeal for the holy see. The Venetians were rebuked for having occupied Faenza, a city belonging to the church, and endeavoured to exculpate themselves by great humility, saying that city had been given up to Valentine by full vote of the cardinals; and that, moreover, they had occupied it in order to prevent the entrance of the Florentines, who had sent troops before it*. In spite of these humble excuses, they never restored Faenza; and the pope at the commencement of his reign without money and without arms, was enabled to fight only with the venerable authority of pontiff.

In the mean time, some princes, who were still alive, or the relations of the slain, returned to the dominion over their cities in Romagna, whilst Valentine, after various vicissitudes, was finally obliged to retire into Castel S. Angelo, by advice of the pope, in order to save himself from the Roman barons, and the many others who wished for his death. His affairs, notwithstanding all the arts of intrigue and deceit, of which he was master, were constantly on the decline. Being taken to the fortress of Ostia, and obliged to leave it, in order to cede the fortresses of Romagna, he obtained a passport from Consalvo, upon the faith of which he went to meet him. True it is that of all men Valentine was the man who least deserved a maintenance of faith; but if the

* Guicciard. Book 6. Ammir. Book 28.

crimes of another man are sufficient to justify our own, there will no longer be any faith in the world. Consalvo chose to stain his illustrious character a third time by a fraud, and endeavoured to take away the passport: as if his bad faith would have vanished by the burning of that paper*. To finish the history of this monster, Valentino was arrested, sent to Spain, and shut up in the fort of Medina del Campo. But he lost not his courage. His genius suggested to him the means of descending the fort by a rope, and finding swift horses ready for him he fled to the kingdom of Navarre to his brother-in-law, where, fighting valiantly for him under Viana, and a conqueror, he was slain, a death only too honourable for such a villain. The whim of fortune directed that his body should be buried at Pampeluna, in that same church of which, in his youth, he had been bishop†.

In the mean time alternate advantages and losses attended the French and Spaniards in the kingdom of Naples; the latter, as we have already said, were inferior in number. But being reinforced, they bravely attacked the French, obliged them to retreat, who, making an halt at Garigliano, a battle took place, in which the French army was routed, and followed up as far as Gaeta. Peter de Medicis was with the French in this battle: endeavouring to escape in a boat laden with artillery, and passing the Garigliano, near the mouth of it the boat sunk by its weight, and the effects of tempestuous winds, and Peter perished‡.

* Jovius, *Vita Cons. Nardi*, lib. 4.

† Tommasi, *Life of D. Valent. Nardi*, lib. 4.

‡ Guicc. lib. 6. Ammirato, in his portraits, says that the Grand Duke Cosmo I. caused a magnificent mausoleum to be constructed for him at Mount Casino. The inscription runs thus:

“ Petro Medici Magni Laurentii Filio Leonis X. Pontif. Maximi

Such was the miserable end of the son of the great Lorenzo, in the thirty-third year of his age, after about nine years of exile, and after having led a wandering life, frequently exposed to the greatest hardships. Nature had bestowed upon him with many advantages which she denied his father, beauty, a robustness of frame, and a natural eloquence; but had refused him that particle of divine inspiration which his father possessed, and which is of more value to rulers than the qualities we have mentioned.

After this signal victory, the Spaniards began to become formidable to all Italy: and the Florentines, therefore, although in alliance with the King of France, sent ambassadors to Consalvo to gain his favourable disposition.

The war still continued with the Pisans, and 1504. Anthony Giacomini was commissary general, who, after having taken Librafatta, wished to attempt something extraordinary. Pisa received her provisions by means of the Arno, either on the land or sea side. The Florentines thought they could divert the course of this river. Upon the opinion of the best engineers, whom they had brought even from Lombardy, they excavated two ditches, one of twenty, the other of thirty arms of breadth, and seven of depth, from the left bank of the Arno as far as the tower called the Pheasant (Del Fagiano) which was ruined, availing themselves of stones to construct a sluice which should shut up the bed of the Arno, to force it to enter the ditches, and send the waters into the pool between Pisa and Leghorn. But

Fratri Clementis VII. Patrueli qui cum Gallorum Castra sequeretur
ex adverso proelio ad Liris ostium naufragio periiit an Ætat XXXIII.

Cosmus Medicis Florent. Dux poni curavit
M D LII.

the art of levelling was so little known in that time, and the nature of rivers is some times so whimsical, that the water flowed not into the ditches which had been excavated, except in times of great floods, which when lowered, it flowed back, and rather consumed the banks of the ancient bed in order to follow its usual road; the end, therefore, after so great an expenditure, was never obtained*. The only advantage derived, was to make use of those ditches, in order to prevent the inroads of the Pisans towards the hills†.

The war continued lingering, and the Florentines met with a shameful defeat near Pisa. Although they had taken in ambush a small body composed of not more than fifteen men of arms, forty light horse, and sixty infantry, commanded by Tarlatino, in a manner that the retreat appeared impossible, the Pisans, animated by their captain alike by words and examples, either to conquer or to die, broke through the ranks of the Florentines, which were so much more numerous, and besides twenty killed, one hundred and twenty horse, and more than one hundred infantry were taken, together with Tosinghi and Guicciardini. It is true that the Pisans received fresh succours in the affray, but the courage of the Florentines, who were already prepared to make the surprise, and their greater number renders the courageous resistance made, and the victory gained by the Pisans, the more honourable to the latter‡.

The reputation of the French power had already much declined in Italy, from the superior merit of Con-

* The engineers had promised that the work should be concluded with 35,000 labours of labourers paid ten soldi a day, and at the 80,000 they had not yet finished half.

† Bonac. diar. Nardi, Ist. lib. 5.

‡ Ammir. lib. 28. Nardi, lib. 4.

salvo, who having so much improved the military discipline, had formed soldiers worthy of the glorious times of Greece and Rome. The French troops, although the best of the age, routed by the Spaniards at Seminara, at the Cerignola, at Garigliano, abandoned the field every where to the great captain, who had successfully occupied almost the whole of the kingdom of Naples. He was, therefore, become the arbiter of Italy. To him the Pisans alike addressed themselves for aid, and the Florentines for protection. Consalvo, who to military joined political talents not inferior, chose not openly to assist the Pisans, in order not to disgust the Florentines, whom he wished to detach from the friendship of the French: but, at the same time, he forbade the latter to molest the city of Pisa. They had disembarked 1,000 men in Piombino to keep Tuscany in subjection: whereby if they protected the Florentines against Alviano, who, following the customs of the leaders of old, sought to make coups-de-main, and live upon the territory of others at discretion, Consalvo, at the same time, showed the Florentines, how much their own fate, as well as that of Pisa, depended upon the Spanish power. But Alviano proud and ardent, despising the threats of Consalvo, secretly assisted by Petrucci, and by Baglioni, determined to repair to Pisa, which, if he had succeeded in entering, he would have done serious injury to the Florentines. Various leaders were at the head of their troops, such as Mark Anthony Colonna, Hannibal Bentivoglio, &c., and the commissary Giacomini, who were in observation of Alviano. After having staid some days at Vignole, he marched along the sea coast towards Pisa. The Florentine troops joined him towards the tower of St. Vincent, where a fierce affair took place. Alviano, inferior in force, fought with great bravery; but having

finally received two wounds in the face, and seeing his army routed, he retreated with only ten horse to the Round Mountain (*Monte Rotondo*), and Chiappino Vitelli, who was with him, to Pisa. The defeat was complete, and gave new courage to the Florentines, who were broken down by so many disasters*.

This prosperous success encouraged them again to attempt the enterprise upon Pisa. The council was at variance: the issue, which had been so frequently unsuccessful even with a greater force, the fear of displeasing Consalvo, disadvised the enterprise, but the universal ardour of the people, animated by the last success, and the authority of the Gonfaloniere Soderini caused it to prevail. Bentivoglio, created captain-general, approached Pisa, and encamped between St. Michael and the Holy Cross with his army which had been increased. The wall was attacked between Porta Calcesana, and St. Francis, and a large part of it was thrown down in two different places, whereby the city might have been taken by assault with better soldiers. But the Pisans hastening upon the ruins, and evincing all the courage engendered by desperation, the cowardly infantry, although spurred on by every method and even with force and stripes by the captains, dared not mount to the assault. Three hundred Spanish infantry, which had been sent to Pisa by the great captain arrived at this time, whence both from the cowardice evinced by the soldiers, and the succours which had joined, it was thought desirable to raise the camp from Pisa, and retreat to Cascina†.

In the mean while peace had been made between France and Spain. After so many losses, Louis, who

* Bonacc. Diar. Nardi, lib. 4. Ammir. lib. 28. Guicciard. lib. 6.

† Bonacc. Diar. Guicc. History, book 6. Nardi and Ammir.

wanted neither sense nor prudence, clearly saw how impracticable it was to reconquer the kingdom of Naples, he had once possessed, and thought of putting an end to hostilities by entering into a convenient agreement.

Isabella, Queen of Castile, wife of the King of Spain, was dead. This kingdom descended to the daughter Jane, an imbecile woman, married to Philip, son of the Emperor Maximilian. The wise Isabella had left her husband administrator as long as he lived, knowing the wisdom he possessed; and wishing to recompense the goodness, and the regards he had always shown her, in order that all the vast monarchy of Spain might descend at once to Philip. A greediness of dominion had given rise to strong dislikes between the father-in-law and son-in-law. The former ill brooking that the rich succession of Arragon should be inherited by a person who was odious to him, decided, in his advanced age, upon marrying again with Germaine di Fois, niece of the King of France. This matrimony tied the knot of peace between the two kings, whereby the King of France ceded as title of dowry to Ferdinand all that still remained to him in the kingdom of Naples, together with the burthen upon the latter of paying him 700,000 dollars in gold*.

Peace being confirmed, Ferdinand wished to go to Naples under the pretext of visiting his kingdom so recently acquired, but there were other reasons. He wished to be far away from the unpleasant sight of the ingratitude of the Castilians, who, upon the arrival of his son-in-law Philip, had abandoned him in order to turn themselves towards the rising sun; and, at the same time, to make himself the more sure of the great captain

* Guicciard. Ist. lib. 6. Jov. Life Cons. lib. 3.

who was to become suspicious from the appearance of entertaining dangerous views of making himself master of that kingdom, or of giving it to his son-in-law, since he had been frequently summoned to return; but in vain.

Having embarked with a large fleet, he made a short stay at Genoa, at Portofino, and Leghorn, where Florentine ambassadors were sent to him, and abundant supplies of provision given to his army. That king was supposed to have the power of regulating the affairs of the Florentines and the Pisans. But neither the ambassadors sent to treat with the king at Naples, nor at his return to Savona, derived any advantage*. The Florentine republic was enveloped on every side in changes of government, in rebellions, and conspiracies. Pope Julius, intent upon taking revenge for the places of the holy see occupied by the small princes, but particularly the Venetians, moved in person with a respectable body of troops, and coming towards Perugia, obliged Baglioni, who was unable to contend with him, to fall at his feet and consign that city to him; whence

passing on to Bologna, he drove out Bentivoglio, ^{1506.} and was preparing to carry on a new destructive war against the Venetians, who, although frequently ordered to restore the places already usurped by Valentine, and occupied by them at his fall, temporized in a manner which shewed their clear intention of not restoring them. On this account he had carried on secret correspondence with the king of France, who was their neighbour, to unite with him against them; and one of the motives of his march was to have an interview with the king, when the commotions in Genoa caused

* Guicciard, History, lib. 6. Nardi, lib. 4. Ammir., lib. 28.

a coldness between them. The Genoese people, irritated either with or without reason, at the pride displayed, and the excesses committed, by the nobility, had rebelled, and obliging the greater part of them to fly, sacked their palaces, changed the form of government, and forced the French guard to take shelter in

Castelletto. This rebellion of Genoa was very ^{1507.} similar to that of the Ciompi of Florence, since here, too, the lower classes took upon themselves the government, created a Painter Paul of the nine (Paolo del Nove) Doge, and elected a new magistracy composed of eight tribunes. Genoa was under the protection of the King of France, and therefore dependant upon him. The king, who had come into Liguria, after in vain calling the Genoese to their duty, was obliged to make use of force. He sent troops who frequently fought against the rebels, who, beaten on every side, finally wished to come to agreement, but were only received by the enraged king at discretion. Re-entering Genoa, he punished the rebels, restored the nobility, and re-established the old government*. Either that the pope had secretly fanned the flame of this rebellion, as Demetrius Guistiniari, who was beheaded in the public square, confessed upon examination; or that as a Savonese, he detested the pride of the Genoese nobility, he was decidedly of the party of the people, and growing angry with the king, broke up the congress, and returned to Rome.

Commotions also arose on the side of Ferrara, and that Court was witness to tragic vicissitudes at the end of the last year. A conspiracy was discovered against

* Guicc. lib. 7. Folietta, Giustiniani, &c.

the duke Alphonso, which had been framed by two of his brothers who were condemned to death, but were shut up in a prison for life*.

King Ferdinand, coming from Naples, stopped at Savona, where the King of France came to meet him. A great concourse of French nobility had assembled there to meet these two great rivals. They were, however, both eclipsed by the presence of the great captain whom the King of France wished to get acquainted with, and invited him to make the fourth at supper with them and the Queen of Spain. This, however, was the last glorious day of the Spanish hero †, who in reward for having conquered a kingdom, and disciplined a body of troops, which had passed for invincible for two hundred years, was treated by the ungrateful Ferdinand as he had shortly before treated a greater

* Guicciardini, more sincere than Giovio, relates that an ill humour had arisen between the Cardinal Hippolito, and Julius, his natural brother, on account of love for a noble lady who had confessed to the cardinal that she was in love with Julius for his fine eyes. The cardinal, seizing the opportunity of Julius being at the chase, caused him to be surrounded by his people, his eyes to be scarified in his presence, and almost blinded. This is the same Hippolito celebrated by the many poetical lies told by Ariosto :

Quelli ornamenti che divisi in molti,
A molti basterian per tutti ornarli
In suo ornamento aorá tutti raccolti
Costui, de che hai voluto ch'io ti parli, &c. &c. &c.

This is the same for whom the wonderful brilliant fleece was composed ; who is honoured by so many other pages of the most flattering praise adorned with the beautiful graces of poetry, which have immortalized the House of Este ; graces so little known, and so badly recompensed, by the rugged disposition, and coarse taste of the cardinal, which the poet denies not, when he first gives vent in his satire to the anger of a sored mind, “ Discite justitiam moniti.”

† Guic., lib. 7. Job. Vita Consul.

and more virtuous man than Consalvo, viz., Columbus, by maintaining towards neither of them the promises he made them, and considering them with that cold indifference, the sister of contempt, which has so frequently in courts been the reward of subjects who happen to outshine their sovereigns in merit. Columbus, in the consciousness of his own virtue and innocence, had sufficient reason to console himself: but it was otherwise with Consalvo, who, serving the king even with deceit, had been frequently the minister of his bad faith: this reflection alone was sufficient to weaken that strength of mind which a hero, whom we endeavour to degrade, preserves amidst his wrongs, and filled his heart with burning anguish*.

The Florentines derived no advantage from the offices done to the two kings at Savona. Both thought it more conformable to their interests, and more easy by keeping them divided, to maintain the two cities in dependance upon them, and, therefore, came to no decision upon the fate of Pisa. Seeing all attempts fruitless, ^{1508.} and that every resource consisted in their own strength, the Florentines again took to arms. But scarce had they made the necessary vigorous preparations, when

* And, in fact, if we are to believe Giovio, who, although he quotes Diego Mendoza, and Anthony of Lévo, thought they could not relate the popular opinions, rather than authentic truths, Consalvo was struck with remorse at having broken his faith with the young Ferdinand and Valentino: he might have added, too, with the King Frederic. It was said also he repented of a third event, which he would never make known. Giovio conjectures that this was having obeyed Ferdinand by returning to Spain, but if he had repented of it, he would have suffered no remorse from the others. In any way, we may learn even from the crimes of great men, that the remembrance of a life innocently passed is what alone can make death more sweet to them.

ambassadors arrived from the King of France, who under far-fetched pretexts, and with a dubious play of words, translated or interpreted into plain language by the magistrates, intimated to the Florentines that the king would not permit them to become Masters of Pisa, without paying him a sum of money. The catholic king (as if they had agreed together) demanded the same, and the Florentines were obliged to promise money to both, in order to recover their own property, and that those sovereigns might not either openly or secretly lend their aid to Pisa*. The Florentines determined upon exerting themselves to the utmost, and having learnt from the cowardice evinced by the soldiers, more than once, how difficult it was to take Pisa by assault, confined their war to surrounding the city on every side, so that pinched by famine, she might finally be obliged to capitulate.

They particularly endeavoured to prevent the
^{1509.} Genoese and Lucchese bringing supplies of provisions. The mouth of the Arno was blocked by the vessels of Corsairs, which were taken into the pay of the Florentines, and with batteries, in order to prevent any aid arriving to them from the Genoese. In fact, many vessels, laden with grain, presented themselves, but were obliged to withdraw. The Lucchese, too, admonished by the injury hitherto done their country, united with the Florentines in an alliance, wherein it was stipulated that the former were to send no succours to Pisa. Besides the mouth of the Arno, that of Fiume-morto, and the Serchio, were also fortified.

In order that all the passes might be watched the

* Ammir., book 28. Nardi, book 4. Here we read of the tricks and contrivances of the King of France, who wanted 50,000 dollars more than the catholic king.

more strictly, by which provisions could be brought to Pisa, the Florentine army was divided into three parts: the first commanded by Alamanno Salviati, was situated at S. Piero in Grado above the Arno, over which was thrown a bridge, in order to pass more speedily over to the other bank, when necessity demanded it, and thus procure an easy communication with the other two camps, one of which, under the command of Anthony Filicaga was pitched towards the gate, which fronts the valley of Serchio; the other under Nicholas Capponi at Mezzana, towards the gate at the shores (Porta alle Piaggie.) In this position, guarding the passes, they placed themselves in order to wait for famine to fight for them *, the effects of which, in short, had already began to be felt in Pisa. Every other pass was shut up, whereby all hope of obtaining supplies vanished. The Pisans supported the most severe hardships with a patience almost incredible, feeding upon the herbs and roots which were plucked by the sides of the roads. The nobility and most respectable persons, being the most exposed to the hatred of the enemy, were obstinate in their determination to perish by famine, rather than surrender. But the people demanded that a treaty should be entered into, and were growing tumultuous. The Pisan government, therefore, began apparently to treat of the terms of capitulation, by means of the Signior of Piombino; but the celebrated Nicholas Machiavelli being sent to it, by the Florentine republic, perceived the whole to be only a pretext for delay, in order to keep the people quiet, and attempt a blow upon a part of the Florentine army. Filicaja, the general of that part of the troops, had been made to expect that the

* Ammir., book 28. Nardi, lib. 4.

gate, which led to Lucca, would be consigned to him; but the Florentines marched with so much circumspection, that the blow failed entirely.

It became, therefore, necessary for the Pisans to think seriously of a surrender; and in order to fix the conditions thereof, Alamanno Salviati, one of the three commissaries, came to Florence with eight Pisan deputies. An universal pardon was granted, and the Florentines wishing to acquire the praise due to moderation, the conditions, under which Pisa returned to their dominion, were the same she had been governed by before the rebellion; so that as Nardi observes, they appeared rather dictated by the conquered than the conquerors. Not only was pardon granted, but they were left in the possession of the estates they had occupied as rebels, nor were they even obliged to restore the Florentine property confiscated in the rebellion*. The three Florentine commissaries Salviati, Filicaja, and Capponi, entered Pisa on the 8th day of June, after almost fourteen years of rebellion.

Thus this republic was twice subdued more by famine than the arms of the Florentines. It may be said, too, to have been bought at a dear price, on account of the sums so frequently paid to the King of France, his greedy generals and ministers, and with the last sum of 50,000 ducats to the catholic king, and 100,000 to the King of France. The fame for riches, which the Florentines enjoyed, attracted to them the indiscreet demands of all princes: whence having paid the above sums to the two kings, it became necessary to pay an-

* Buonacc. Diar. Ammir. Ist. lib. 28. Nardi, lib. 4. This historian was sent by the Florentine government to liquidate the estates and revenues already confiscated by the Florentines when the Pisans were rebels.

ther to the emperor, who naturally unquiet, prodigal and poor, and always in want of money, threatened to go into Italy, and be crowned in Rome: 40,000 ducats were also paid to him on account of the pretensions which the sophisms of the imperial chancery were able to make upon Pisa, and the other Florentine states. Thus the three first sovereigns of Europe were not ashamed of conspiring, as it were, together, in order to extort, without any colour of right, unlawful sums from the Florentine republic.

During this little war, the most agitating tumults disturbed Italy. It was hardly to be expected that Tuscany could remain tranquil in the midst of them. The Venetians knew, to their sorrow, what an error they had committed in uniting themselves with foreigners against an Italian prince, Louis, the Moor, and having ruined him, in order to gain a retail of his states, thus establish close to them in Italy a formidable power like the French, who considering as lost whatever they had ceded to the Venetians, wished only to recover it. The emperor was irritated against them on account of the shameful peace, which he had been obliged to conclude last year by the Venetian arms; the King of Spain, because he wished to recover the ports of the kingdom of Naples, engaged to that republic by the young Ferdinand; the pope, finally, on account of the cities usurped by her from Valentine, and which he repeated belonged to the holy see.

In the mean while the formidable league of Cambray was entered into, of the first powers of Europe against a republic of merchants. The pope, who was not without political talents, who loved Italy, and saw her fall by this league, into the hands of foreigners, was, indeed, the last to accede to it; and if the Venetians, who had

already discovered what would be the end of the treaty of Cambray, had ceded to him the cities he demanded of them secretly, not only would he not have joined the league, but would probably have fought for them. But being rebutted by their repulsive conduct, he entered into it with all the fervour which wrath, to which he was so much subject, suggested to him, and made use, too, of his spiritual arms, by placing the kingdom under an interdict. The Venetians, grown proud by the advantages already gained against Cesar, and conscious of their own strength, thought themselves capable of confronting the whole of them. Never, indeed, had the extent of the Venetian territory, in Italy, been so great: but from commerce they particularly derived the riches, which made them superior to the greatest sovereigns, although it was now approaching the period of its decline, on account of the new discoveries made by the Portuguese. The precautions taken to resist this tempest were very great*: but we have frequently seen that the ill-disciplined troops of Italy could not contend with foreigners. The Venetians experienced a great defeat from the King of France at Ghiaradadda, and added to the hostilities committed against them by the other allies, they lost almost all the continent, part of which was occupied by France, part by the pope, by the emperor, and by the Duke of Ferrara, who had also joined the confederacy. The Venetians found themselves in those distresses, into which more than a century and a half afterwards, another mercantile and maritime republic, Holland, was plunged; who, seeing her territory almost entirely lost, deliberated, for a moment, upon abandoning it, and establishing herself entirely upon the sea. Thus

* Guicciardini Hist., book 7. Bembo. History of Venice, &c.

the Venetian senate was hesitating whether it should entirely abandon the Terra Firma, when a ray of hope began to dawn. Padua, one of the most important cities, was first lost, afterwards retaken, and sustained a celebrated siege by Maximilian, in which both sides distinguished themselves: but which was finally raised to the immortal glory of the defenders. This event gave fresh courage to the Venetians, and the Germans having retreated with shame, they regained many of their lost towns, and were finally saved by the discord which commonly accompanies confederacies. They appeased the angry Julius with the most humble acts of submission, and by a restitution of the places he pretended to, to which he assented the more easily, well knowing the ruin which Italy was continually exposed to by the establishment of foreigners, which he took every care to prevent. He endeavoured to separate the emperor from the French, and make Genoa rebel, but in vain; put in motion 15,000 Swiss he had taken into his pay against the Milanese. After these provisions, he declared himself in favour of the Venetians, took off the interdict, sent away the ambas-

^{1510.} sadors of the King of France, gave peremptory orders to the Duke of Ferrara to separate himself from the French; and, upon his refusal, attacked him first with spiritual arms, fulminating his censures against him, and afterwards with his temporal force, by ordering Francis Maria Rovere, his nephew, Duke of Urbino, to march against him*.

The ferocious pontiff, who wished that all the Italians would join him in his hatred and his enterprises against the French, ill brooked that the Florentines should re-

* For all these great events, see Guicciardini, particularly, book 7.

main attached to the ancient league with them: this irritated the pope particularly against the gonfaloniere Soderini, who thought of governing the helm of the republic. He had the glory, in the last year, of having restored to the republic an important part of her state, Pisa with its territory. He now turned his thoughts towards Montepulciano, already occupied by the Siennese, a truce with whom still continued, which, however, was about to expire, and the Florentine troops were already approaching the confines, to recover that place. Although there existed in Sienna a party inclined to resist the Florentines by force, Pandolph Petrucci, who was the soul of that republic, was of contrary opinion. Hereto was added the authority of the pontiff, whom Petrucci made perceive that it was not the moment to act hostilely against the Florentines, who were receiving succours from France, and this war might bring the French arms upon their territory, and near the pontifical states*.

Thus the league, with the Siennese, was renewed,
^{1511.} and the gonfaloniere acquired fresh credit.

Shortly before, however, a circumstance had occurred which shows how little rulers can depend upon the goodness of their own intentions, and the love they bear towards their country. The gonfaloniere had incurred the anger of the pope. There was a young man, Princisvalle Stufa, a Florentine, at Bologna, who was discontented with the government of Florence; this young man contrived a conspiracy with the pontifical court, and Marcantonio Colonna, whereby the gonfaloniere was to be murdered, and the government changed. He tried, in vain, to tempt Philip Strozzi, who being brother-in-law of the cardinal of the Medicis, he considered would be

* Ammir. Ist. lib. 28. Nardi, lib. 5. Malavotti, lib. 7.

ready to enter the conspiracy: but perceiving, from his answers, that he not only would not adhere to it, but that, probably, he would discover his designs, he retired hastily to the Siennese territory. His father, who was thought privy to the attempt, was arrested, tried, and finally banished*. This must have shown Soderini with what kind of enemies he had to contend, and that if he wished to maintain his situation, it was necessary to soften the pope, or, at least, not give so irritable a man new motives for disgust: but still, instead of learning the dangerous state, in which both himself and the republic were placed, in order to adhere blindly to the wishes of the King of France, he drew himself into fresh embarrassment.

A party, inimical to the pope, had been excited, terrifying him with a council†. France gave the first impulse to this discontent amongst the ecclesiastics. Five French cardinals, enemies of the pope, arriving in Florence, ordered a council, and demanded the city of Pisa from the Florentines, in order to hold it in. The latter wishing, in fact, to preserve themselves neutral, in the midst of the confusion, which convulsed Italy, ought not to have conceded it, knowing how much the pope would be irritated by granting such a permission. It would not have been difficult to have managed with such dexterity, as to have refused it without indisposing the King of France towards them: the Florentines being able to show the king the danger of their states in being exposed to the vengeance of the pope; the disconcert that would have arisen in their people, who were so very

* Ammir. lib. 28.

† The expression of Berni is very singular:

Godete o Preti, ora cha il vostro Cristo
Dai Turchi, e da' Concilii vi difende.

religious ; the little security, on that account, which could be held out to the members of the council, and how more easily and safely they would be able to hold it in another city belonging to the dominions, either of the king, or the emperor ; the more so, as the latter demanded that the council should be held in a city which was subject to him*. These very obvious reflections could not have escaped the council : but the gonfaloniere was too much addicted to the French faction. The party of fanatics, moreover, who were once followers of Savonarola, remembering his prophecy that the church was to be reformed, thought the fulfilment of the prophecy arrived, and willingly gave their consent to the dangerous request †. The pope had not failed to oppose a counter poison to this evil, by ordering another council in Rome, in St. John's the Lateran (San Giovanni Laterano) whereby he declared the other entirely dissolved with an admonition to the members of that of Pisa, in which he threatened them with being deprived of the cardinal's hat, if within sixty days, they returned not to their duty ; but the latter protested that their own being some time ordained, this decree was not sufficient to dissolve it. The Florentines managed this delicate affair so awkwardly, that they displeased both parties. The few members of the council, therefore, joined in Pisa : but the signs of disapprobation and abhorrence given this assembly by the clergy and the seculars ; the insults offered them, the gates of the cathedral being shut in their face ; the prohibition given to three hundred French lancers‡ to enter Pisa to protect the council, exasperated

* Guicciardini Ist. lib. 10. Nardi Ist. lib. 5.

† Nerli Comm. lib. 5.

‡ One hundred and fifty archers only were permitted to enter.

the cardinals and the French officers: whilst, on the other hand, the pope, who had already sent to order the Florentines not to permit such a council to be held in their city, was highly offended, and took this permission, as an insult offered to the majesty of the holy see. He recalled his minister, and placed his city under interdict, foreseeing how many enemies would be multiplied against the government on that account*. The gonfaloniere, however, obliged the friars, under pain of exile, to keep the churches open. The pope saw that, in order to bring this city over to his own party, the safest manner would be to send away the gonfaloniere, and replace the house of Medicis, whose party had increased after the death of Peter, who was thought a cruel man. The head of this family, both as cardinal and grateful for so signal a benefit, would have followed his party†. The pope had succeeded not only in detaching from the French alliance, but also of joining with him, the King of Spain, who was not pleased at seeing the increasing power of the French in Italy. This alliance was solemnly published in Rome, where speaking of the union

* Bonacc. Diar. Nardi Ist. lib. 5. Amm. lib. 28.

† The gonfaloniere, like all heads of government, had a contrary party: and amongst them a number of young men, some of whom were afterwards concerned in driving him from the magistracy. One of the most celebrated men of letters of that age, Bernardo Rucellai, of morose character, always discontented with all systems of government, and, therefore, retired from public affairs, lived in otium in his *Orti Oricellarii*, where a society of litterati met, and where the Platonic academy had taken refuge: with literary they mixed political disputes, and the actions of the government, particularly of the gonfaloniere, were severely censured. Neither the society, nor the discourses held by it, were unknown to him, but he thought proper to despise or to tolerate them, and even treated some of them with familiarity, for example, Paul Vettori.—Nerli Com.

of the church, of the Pisan council, and of the annuity paid to the former by the Florentine republic, they pointed out, in no obscure terms, that in order to heal that sick country, a change of rulers was necessary*. This was the principal motive of the Cardinal de Medicis being created legate of the pontifical arms in Romagna. Another provision increased the hatred of the pontiff against the Florentine government, which was that, being obliged to raise money, taxes had been laid upon the priests without permission of the pope; a resolution which, although strongly opposed, was overcome by the particular influence of the gonfaloniere†.

In the mean time, the Pisan council had began its session in St. Michael's, with little applause, not being able to do so in the cathedral. The cardinals having complained of the affronts they had received, an order came to open the cathedral to them, the decorations to be made for them, and sacred vases given them, with every thing they had need of. But, whilst they were disputing in the church with the force of logic, other contests took place in the city, with coarser arms. Frequently affrays had occurred between the Florentine, French and Pisan soldiers ‡. They often came to blows, to the danger of the prelates and the cardinals themselves, and they

* Guicciard. History, book 10.

† Ammiratori, History, book 28.

‡ Guicciardini asserts that the two French commanders, Lotree and Ciatiglione himself were wounded. According to Ammirato, Ciatiglione alone was so. The celebrated Roscoe, says Lotree, run the risk of being killed in an affray upon the bridge, and was saved by his own son, (Life of Leo X., cap. 8). He quotes the authority of Giovio, but besides that, the authority of Giovio is inferior to that of the two Florentine historians, Guicciardini and Ammirato: Giovio speaks of the son of the mayor of Pisa, who was Strozzi, and not Lotree: but this is one of the few blots in this very judicious work.

finally thought of transferring this assembly to Milan, to the greatest satisfaction of the Florentines and the Pisans*. The pope, however, neither took off the interdict, nor did the Florentine government urge it, since no visible injury was derived from it: nay, the real injury and the effects of the anger of Julius fell upon the priests and monks, who, as all ecclesiastical functions were interdicted, no longer gained what religious charity is wont so generously to bestow†; the masses, the divine services were done away with, and even the dead to the danger of infecting the living, remained upon the ground, waiting the pleasure of the pope, that they might be carried to the tomb; and, although the pope frequently suspended the interdict, more from a motive of not doing injury to the ecclesiastics than otherwise, it continued for some months; when the injunctions being finally taken off the priests, the interdict was also removed by the pontiff.

The interdict, however, ceased not without leaving an additional inquietude in the government. Forgiveness was granted to the Archbishop Cosimo Pazzi, who had motives of disagreement with the signiory, in the injunctions, since refusing to pay them for some shops situated in the archbishopric, the magistrate had caused these shops to be sealed, obliging the merchants to pay them

* Bonacc. Diar. Amm. History, book 28. Nardi, book 5.—John Cambi's History.

† See Cambi's History: “They could only confess, but not take the sacrament, nor bury in sacred places: the dead were deposited in the great churches, in certain places, and cemeteries, and afterwards the friars were placed secretly in the tombs, that is, those who had them; other dead were preserved . . . the poor church mendicant friars and other chapel priests were those who suffered, because, for whatever rich man died, no expenditure was made in wax, priests nor masses, nor church decoration, and this occasioned less ostentation in candles, bells, &c.”

for the proprietor, and circumstances had arisen therefrom which the city decided against the archbishop. The latter, too, instead of freely granting all ecclesiastics permission to re-open the treasures of the church, began to give the power of doing so to some friars only in particular, such as the Franciscan, the Osservanti, the hermits of San Gallo, the chapter and college of St. Lawrence; by which act, excluding the others, they gave rise to a division, which discovered factions and parties, and some indiscreet priests exacted in their absolutions from the penitents upon oath, that if they ever came to the magistracy, they would never consent, on any occasion, to place impositions or injunctions upon the ecclesiastics, even in the extreme wants of their country. The pope had given absolution without restrictions; and those were false zealots, who assigned limits thereto, and exposed Florence only to fresh disturbances. After some altercation between the government and the archbishop, it was freely granted to all priests to absolve without any limitation*.

Whilst the Florentine government was combating with ecclesiastical subtleties, other wars of the most dreadful complexion tore to pieces unfortunate Italy; a short picture of which may serve at least as a consolation to moderns, and undeceive the encomiasts of past times. The horrors which accompany war are always great; but those which were practised in these years, have rarely had their equal. Amidst innumerable melancholy examples, the sad fate which attended the Vicentines, in the last year, deserves to be mentioned. Near Costoza, in the mountains of the Vicenza district, there are deep caverns, which extend under ground like a laby-

* Cambi, Hist. Nardi, Hist. Floren. book 5.

rinth, for some miles. An immense number of the Vicentines had taken refuge in these places, with their property, in order to avoid the horrors of a sacked city. The barbarous soldiery, however, set fire to the mouth of the caverns, and suffocated an infinity of these miserable creatures. Italy, too, was witness to another scandalous example in the church: the high pontiff of peace placed himself at the head of his troops *; directed the artillery against the Mirandola; and in the ardour of entering it, mounted by the breach. A nephew of the pope, the Duke of Urbino, killed with his own hands the Cardinal of Pavia, with other similar excesses.

The Florentines, in a kind of calm, viewed the tempest which was hovering around them on all sides, always dreading that it would finally burst upon their territory. The King of France had already demanded of them, as his allies, not only what had been agreed upon, but extraordinary subsidies. In spite of the gonfaloniere who, loyal to France, was of opinion that every thing ought to be done for that king, the council still considered it their duty not to go beyond the conditions agreed upon †. For a considerable time there was an uncertain wavering in affairs, which kept the minds of the Florentines in great anxiety. The French had been again re-inforced in Lombardy, and obliged the pontifical army to draw back. The pope was obliged to retire from Bologna, which the Bentivoglio entered again: the fortress was taken and dismantled, and the celebrated bronze statue of the pontiff himself, a work of Michael Angelo, was thrown to the ground ‡. The King of France might have reduced the

* Benbi, Hist. Ven. Guicc. lib. 10.

† Ammir. Hist. book 28. Nardi, book 5.

‡ This was one of Michael Angelo's finest works: the pope, in the act of passing his benediction. But the great artist had so well

pontiff to a bad plight, but he stopped his course of victory from the reverence he bore towards the head of the church, hoping that when he returned to himself he would solicit peace. The pontiff gave him hopes of doing so as long as he found himself harassed; but he changed his tone, and re-assumed his natural loftiness, when he received the succours from Spain. Neither the weakness of his constitution, nor the feebleness of old age, nor even death itself which stood over him, could restrain the youthful designs of this ferocious old man. A languor; a sudden swooning amidst the heats of August, brought him to the brink of the tomb. All Rome thought he was dead, so that the popular tumults, customary at the death of a pope, took place; whilst, despising the advice of his physicians *, and making use of whatever diet he pleased, his strength of body became re-established, and therewith all his ambitious prospects regained their vigour. The alliance was solemnly published in Rome between the pope, the King of Spain, and the Venetians against France, leaving place for the Emperor and others to enter it†. The pope, in order to give his actions a greater popularity and splendour in Italy, proclaimed and caused it to be made known, that the alliance was formed in order to liberate Italy from barbarians: by this generic name, foreigners only could

expressed his natural fierceness in the countenance of this pontiff, even in that act, that the pope himself, contemplating it, asked Michael Angelo, if he was giving his blessing or his curse?—The metal of the broken statue was converted into a cannon, which received the name of pope Julius.—Vasari, Life of Michael Angelo.

* Guicciardini says that he did not obey the precepts of the physicians, because he ate raw apples: they were then thought pernicious, at present wholesome, particularly in the summer's heat.

† Guic. book 10.

be understood. This was an insult to the allied Spaniards, and the emperor himself, who was invited to join it. But interest and animosity make us lose sight of, or pay no attention to, the delicacy due to national honour.

The troops of the alliance joined; amongst which were eight or ten thousand men, of brave Spanish infantry, who had been already formed by the great captain. They came from Naples, commanded by Raimond of Cardona, a man of very mediocre military talents, and who therefore ought to have paid deference to Navarro and to Colonna. The Cardinal of the Medicis entered too as legate of the pope. The French army was more numerous after being joined by the reinforcements commanded by Gaston

di Fois, nephew of the king, who at the age of 1512. twenty-two years, proved he possessed the qualifications of the greatest general. Intelligent, active, intrepid, he had no rival at that time in Italy, and he commanded the French army. The allied army was besieging Bologna, which with the foreign garrison and courageous citizens defended herself valiantly: she was, however, in great danger of falling, which Gaston de Fois, who was at Finale hearing of, arrived by forced marches with a large body of picked troops in the midst of the snow and frosts at night-time through a gate badly guarded by the enemy, who, intent upon opening the breach to take it by assault, gave themselves little care to guard the passes. When the arrival of so powerful a succour was known to the besiegers, they retired in haste.

Whilst this brave general was liberating Bologna with so much promptitude, news reached him that Brescia and Bergamo had rebelled against him, and had received the Venetians. He departed like lightning; flew to Brescia; cut to pieces a large body of the enemy, who opposed his march; and introduced 3,400 men into the

castle of Brescia, which still held out for the French. The Brescians were ordered to surrender: upon their refusal, the most fierce assault was made, wherein Fois performed prodigies of valour. The natives and Venetian troops being overpowered, a horrid slaughter of about 6,000 persons ensued, and was followed by the most lamentable sacking of houses, churches and nunneries. Bergamo, at this mournful news, returned to her devotion towards the French, and contributions of money were laid upon her*.

The retreat of the French general had again placed Bologna in danger, when, collecting as many troops as he could, he returned towards the enemies' army, which had been also increased, and, on Easter Day the celebrated action took place, of which Italy for several years had seen nothing similar. The French army had the advantage in number, and the valour of the general, who was aided by the military talents of the Duke of Ferrara, by his numerous artillery, and his skill in directing it. The inferiority of the other was compensated for by the bravery of the Spanish infantry, hitherto unconquered. The French, who, for a considerable time had not been able to confront the Spaniards, in the wars of Naples, panted to recover their ancient renown; whence a very bloody battle was to be expected. The opinion of Navarro prevailed in the French army. He had always thought that battle should be avoided by temporizing, since he well knew what the enemy suffered from scarcity of provisions: when obliged to fight, he thought proper to await the enemy in the entrenchment; and had arranged both the defensive and offensive with so much skill, that the attack became very dangerous for

* Guicc. History, book 10.

the French. But the experience of many ages has proved what advantage that impetuous nation has always had in the attack.

On Easter Day, 11th April, the brave La Fois, who, together with his other warlike merits possessed great eloquence, joyful in countenance, with his eyes sparkling with warlike ardour, mounted upon the bank of the Ronco, harangued his soldiers, encouraging them to the fight; and his words being received by the troops with joyful shouts, the drum was sounded, and they marched towards the enemy*. On each side were the two hostile cardinals. Sanseverino, legate of the council, was accoutred with shining arms; on the other side was the Cardinal de Medicis for the pope. The advantageous position occupied by the army of the confederacy, was, at the beginning very prejudicial to the French, when the Duke of Ferrara, by an ingenious and rapid manœuvre, causing the artillery to change position, disposed it in a manner that the havock done by it amongst the enemy was dreadful†, particularly amongst the cavalry, as the infantry remained, by order of Navarro, extended on the ground. The former,

* The speeches mentioned by historians in these times, are works of their fancy. That placed in the mouth of Fois, by Guicciardini, is taken, at least in the beginning, from what Lucan puts in the mouth of Cæsar before the battle of Pharsalia.

† The victory of the French was in great measure owing to Duke Alphonso and his excellent artillery, as we have above mentioned. A singular anecdote was related at that time, by those persons who were envious of him: "The disposition of the artillery was such, that not only the army of the allies, but a part of the French on advance before the line of the enemy could be exposed to it. It is said that Alphonso, being made to observe his danger, answered in the heat of the contest, to the artillerymen: 'Fire away without fear of doing wrong, because they are all our enemies.'"

nevertheless, stood firm: but Fabrizio Colonna, seeing the horrid massacre that was made of his own men, who were obliged to remain immovable, and undefended in face of the enemy's fire, losing patience, spurred his horse beyond the lines, and the remainder of the army was obliged to move after him. They fought for a long time with equal valour; finally, however, all the other squadrons yielded to the French arms*, except the Spanish infantry, against which various bodies of troops had pushed forward in vain, when abandoned by the cavalry, and obliged to retreat, they did so in excellent order. Fois, unable to permit this corps to retire as it were untouched, and the victory not appearing to him complete, if he did not rout it, attacked it furiously at the head of 1,000 horse: an assault that proved fatal to him, because, either falling or being thrown from his horse, he, although brother of the Queen of Spain, was slain by the Spaniards. Few generals at so early an age have done so much: an age the most adapted to military enterprise; in which robustness of limbs, readiness of mind, celerity in execution, and intrepidity in action, are requisite qualifications that are most frequently found in young men.

The army of the confederacy, with the exception of the corps of Spanish infantry, was defeated with the greatest slaughter on both sides. An immense number of French officers remained upon the field of battle: besides Gaston de Fois, Ivo Allegre with his two sons, the Lord Croetta, the Baron of Grammont, Molard, leader of the Gascons, Jacob de' Tedeschi, Boues, nephew of the Cardinal of Nantes, Picciabagli, the Baron

* Ariosto, who attributes the victory to Alphonso, often speaks of this battle in his poem, but most at length in the 14th canto.

of Seces, and the Lord of La Motta: Lotue, who ran to succour Fois, was reported dead, and pierced with twenty wounds. On the other side, the number of prisoners was very great; amongst the latter were the heads of the army, Navarro, Colonna, the legate of the pope; and whilst the generous La Fois had fallen a victim to his own valour, the cautious viceroy had retired so precipitately from the battle, that no tidings were heard of him for four days*. Finally, it was learnt that he had arrived upon the territory of the Florentine Romagna†. There is a great difference in the number of the slain, which, between both sides were not fewer than 15,000. But the conquerors had experienced the greater loss in the youthful warrior who commanded them. By his death, the soul which animated this great body was wanting; he left no one worthy to replace him, and the soldiery, who had been accustomed to march under his command to certain victory, were dismayed.

The first news of this battle, disheartened Rome as much as it gladdened Florence; but when all the circumstances were made known, little cause was found either for joy or sorrow. The French had met with great losses in the battle which were not supplied by fresh reinforcements, which joined the enemy on every side: besides the Spaniards, the Venetians and the pontifical troops, a large corps of Swiss came down to Lombardy, which, joining the Venetian and German troops, formed a very powerful army. Palissa, who was declared upon the death of Fois, general in chief, having neither force nor genius to resist, was retreating, and, thus, in a moment, all the fruits of the day of Ravenna

* Guicciard. History, book 10.

† Nardi, book 5. Guicciard, ib.

vanished, and the conquests of the French in Italy were lost.

The pontiff might then have easily regained his states, but that was not sufficient for him. Implacable in hatred, he loved vengeance too dearly, and wanted to exercise it against two enemies, the Florentine republic, and the Duke of Ferrara. Capable of softening his pride, when political reasons demanded it, he had, in the uncertainty of affairs, suspended his rage against the Florentines, and removed the interdict, in order not to drive them by persecution entirely into the arms of the French: but he scarcely saw them deprived of the support of this power, when he put on an imperious tone; ordered their ambassador at Rome to remove the gonfaloniere, Soderini, from the government: then sent Pucci, his officer, (data-rio), to Florence, who, in very lofty words, counselled them to abandon the French, and enter into the alliance, which he termed *holy*. The government gave vague and undecided answers: but, after the useless treaties and threats, the sad effects were discovered. The viceroy had already agreed with the pope to change the government of Florence. The Cardinal Gurgense, who had in vain demanded money of the Florentines for the emperor, joined the viceroy, and a treaty was set on the tapis in Mantua, which was kept, however, so secret, that it was never even perceived by the Florentine ambassador*. The viceroy had been purchased, too, by the gold of the Medicis. With this deliberation, he marched from Bologna with a body of Spanish troops toward Tuscany, and the Cardinal de Medicis joined him at the confines,

* Nardi affirms that a Florentine mercer was the first to advise the gonfaloniere of it.

who had escaped from the hands of the French*, and declared by the pope his legate in Tuscany.

The republic, who saw this tempest coming upon her, sent ambassadors to the viceroy to know his intentions, and attempt an accommodation. He demanded the dismissal of the gonfaloniere; the restoration of the family of the Medicis to Florence; and the form of government, such as it was before their expulsion. The gonfaloniere, having assembled the council, and explained to them the demands that had been made, declared himself ready to abandon that high office for the peace and salvation of his country; but that they ought well to consider the weight of the other demands, which affected the loss of liberty, and a return to the dominion of the family of the Medicis. After long deliberation, it was agreed upon, that that family should return to their native country, but as private individuals, and no other innovation should be made: shewing a powerful desire to defend themselves, which they would have been able to do, if the necessary vigour of mind, and promptitude of execution had actuated the gonfaloniere and his friends, since a body of more than 16,000 infantry had been assembled in Prato, against whom the enemy were advancing. The troops of the republic amounted to 20,000 infantry, and 3,000 light horse, a force numerically superior, but not so in valour, to that commanded by the viceroy, which is not mentioned with certainty; but amounted not to 10,000 soldiers, all, however, picked men, who had been present at the battle of Ravenna†.

* The manner in which the cardinal fled from the hands of the French, the vicissitudes and dangers of this flight are minutely explained by Giovio in his Life.

† Nardi, History, book 5. Guicciard. book 1. Ann. Book 11. The latter, reduces the army of the viceroy to 5,000 infantry.

The dispositions for defence were not badly taken. In order to avoid every action in the open field, and to restrain the malcontents of the city, it was thought proper not to draw too far off, and the troops were distributed within and without the walls at the three gates of Prato, Faenza, and St. Gallo, towards which the enemy might advance. These troops, however, were alike without discipline and courage; and wanted officers and able commanders. The heads of the government betrayed a considerable dismay. Fresh ambassadors were sent to the viceroy, who had begun to lay siege to the city of Prato. The difficulties with which he too found himself surrounded, the want of provisions particularly, easily induced him to agree to more just conditions: he, therefore, promised to depart upon being provided with the necessary provisions, and a competent sum paid to him. New ambassadors were to be sent to agree upon these articles. But all was alike badly managed, both in arms and council. In an affair of so much importance, where every moment is precious, a fatal apathy was evinced by the government. The viceroy, pinched by famine, fearing to be kept at bay by the Florentines by this treaty, endeavoured to occupy the city of Prato, which could furnish him with provisions. If this city had been defended with any courage, the viceroy would have been soon obliged to retreat. But it was not possible to be guilty of greater cowardice: the hasty march, and the journey through mountainous places had only allowed him to carry with him two cannon; and one of these, on firing, immediately burst; nevertheless he opened a hole in the wall like a window, under which, however, the Florentine soldiers stood in array with their pikes and arquebusses ready to fire at whoever approached or got upon the wall: the enemy

nevertheless began to mount, and the death of only two Florentine soldiers threw the remainder of the weak army into such dismay, that cowardly taking to flight, the city was lost on the 30th of August, with the greatest facility.

One of the most melancholy scenes followed. In this wretched city, the deplorable tragedy of Brescia was again represented, and 4 to 5,000 persons were put to death*. Neither sex nor age, sacred places nor convents and nunneries, were spared. The richest citizens were taken, and obliged to ransom themselves with a large sum of money, and those who had no money were cruelly tormented to oblige them to find it. Troops, indeed, who have met with a great resistance, who have seen many of their companions perish before them, and who are panting for revenge, may be guilty of such cruelties ; but that generous soldiers, in cold-blood, cut their fellow-citizens to pieces, who make no opposition, as happened in this unfortunate city, is an horror hardly to be conceived†. This was not a battle, but a massacre. All this was carried into execution, too, under the eyes of a legate of the pope, by a body of troops sent by him, in order to give a paternal correction to the Florentines†.

* In Brescia, which was so much more populous than Prato, they counted 6,000 persons cut to pieces, whence, according to the population, the calamity was greater in Prato. It is true that Guicciardini, who is accustomed to diminish the number in battles, in massacres, &c., says only 2,000 ; but Nardi, Cambi, Ammirato, &c., say about 5,000.

† Buonacca. Diar., says "an affair truly horrid, and one of the most cruel, that for a long time has taken place in any place of the world of which we have account." Guicciardini, Cambi, Nardi, &c., speak in the same tone.

‡ Many reflected that it was the Cardinal Proposto of Prato, and going there twenty years before, when a young man, was received

The legate, indeed, having placed sentinels at the greater church, where many women had taken refuge, gave some protection to their honour; a trifling remedy for so great an evil. Many other females, both on that and the following days, became the victims of military licentiousness; nor were there wanting examples worthy of Sparta and of Rome*, of courageous virgins, who, in order to save themselves from the brutality of these barbarians, put themselves to death.

The Florentine government was terrified at this dreadful event, and incapable of acting with resolution, remained at once in suspense and undecided. Even the

with the greatest magnificence. Amongst other sacred pomps, a triumphal arch was seen at the Florentine gate, which represented a sacred mystery, in which two angels, viz., two little children, were singing hymns in praise of the cardinal: the canopy broken, the children fell dead to the ground, and the triumph was converted into mourning. Whence it was noted that the entrance of that man into Prato, either as friend or enemy, was always fatal.

* Nardi relates various cases: "The unhappy girl crying and full of pain, was caressed and consoled by these very soldiers: but she recommending herself, and dissimulating as much as she could the excess of her grief, approached a balcony by degrees, threw herself from it with one leap upon the ground, and provided for the preservation of her chastity with the bitter remedy of death."—The historian ought to have preserved her name. Another, whose name is also unknown, married to a cooper, being dishonoured by a soldier or officer, and taken along with him even into Lombardy as a servant dressed in man's clothes, killed the soldier one night, robbed his baggage, took one of the best horses, and returned to Prato, and having confessed all that happened to her husband, before dismounting, asked him if he was content to take her again, and treat her as a good wife, with the new dowry she brought him of five hundred florins: the husband answered gladly, yes, and they lived together contented. Nardi. lib. 5. The brother of this historian, the Mayor or Potestà, at Campi, was taken there, and obliged to purchase himself again.

well-disposed citizens, frightened by the occurrence at Prato, dreaded a similar event in their own city. The fear, however, was vain: so populous a city, which had not been dismayed before the army of Charles VIII.; which, for some years, had courageously sustained a long siege against the whole Spanish army; could not fear the little body of the viceroy. But when fear and disconcert take possession of the heads of a government, all is lost. This dismay gave courage to some seditious young Florentines, whose vices, luxury, and debts rendered them desirous of any change of government*. They went to the palace with concealed arms, and entering the room of the gonfaloniere, had the temerity to order him to leave it, and lay down his office. A man possessed of any energy, would have spoken to them with the dignity of character he possessed, rebuking them for their daring presumption in offering violence to the chief magistrate; and had this man, or his companions, been endowed with courage, those seditious young men would not

* They had concerted the blow, for a long time, with the Medicis. Anthony Francis Albizzi, one of the principal, is said to have had a conversation in the Casentino with Julius de Medicis, who was then a Jérusalemitan prior, under pretence of a hunt, the latter having gone there purposely in disguise. A number of these young men, for a considerable time, conspired for the change in Florence. Nardi, who knew them, and heard them boast of what had happened, relates that Julius de Medicis held a correspondence with them in a singular manner. A small letter was enclosed in a pike of tin. A faithful countryman hid it in the most secret places, and deposited it afterwards at night, in a hole of the wall which surrounded the burying-ground of Santa Maria Novella, on the side of the old square: where it was found by persons who were privy to it, who also placed the answer there at night-time: by which means the messenger was ignorant to whom he had brought the letter, which was without superscription.—Nardi, History, book 6.

have dared to lay hands upon him, as they might have been either arrested or put to death by the guards of the palace, the servants and other members of the council, who were far more numerous than themselves. The want of courage, in so dangerous a moment, became the ruin of the gonfaloniere, of the government and of liberty. Soderini frightened, cowardly imploring his life, was dragged from the palace, and taken to the house of Vettori.

Those violators of the laws, however, saw that it was necessary for them to cover their violence with some legal varnish; and that in order to proceed by some rule, the magistracy, to whom it belonged, should destroy the office of gonfaloniere. Urgent requests being made to that effect by the seditious, so great was the esteem in which that man was held, that upon the proposal being brought to deliberation, it was rejected. He had made a mistake to place himself in the hands of his enemies, since Vettori was one of the principal together with Rucellai, Albizzi and others, who then protested that if the proposal was not gained, the life of the gonfaloniere would be in danger, which the imbecile magistracy believing, he was finally and forcibly cashiered to the regret of all good men. And, indeed, looking back upon his government, which had lasted about ten years, we find no act of violence, nor irregularity committed in it: on the contrary, it appears, that either from the moderation or justice of the gonfaloniere, or that the constitution was arrived at a certain point of perfection, never had more civil liberty been enjoyed in Florence with greater tranquillity. The members of the greater council were frequently above 2,000 in number; nevertheless, so well equipoised were the powers exercised by the other magistrates, that the government could be alone

odious to those citizens, who aimed at being more powerful than the laws. Soderini stained his fine government by imbecility and cowardice at the end ; ignorant that a man, who is at the head of a republic, should be ready every moment to expose his life for the defence of the laws.

He was certainly a man of probity and virtue, a lover of his country and of liberty, a rigid observer of justice ; but all his fine qualities were tarnished with weakness*. Leaving the city on the night of the 30th of August, he arrived at Sienna with intention of going to Rome to the cardinal his brother, from whom he requested his interest with the pope, to grant him passport and security ; which the pope willingly conceded him, but the cardinal, in sending it to him by a trusty servant, Anthony of Segna, gave him secretly to understand he ought not to trust to it. Soderini, therefore, feigning a wish to visit the Madonna of Loretto, wrote ostensible letters to his brother, that he would delay his arrival, and went to Ancona, where he hastily embarked for Ragusa, a place well disposed towards him from the recollection of the justice he had exercised towards the merchants when under his government. The irritated pontiff, seeing himself deluded, ordered the faithful Anthony of Segna to be thrown into prison, and so cruelly tormented, that when

* Nardi, History, lib. 5. Guicc. book 11. Cambi. Ann. book 28. The Florentine secretary had the greatest contempt for this man : his verses are well known :

La notte, che morì Pier Soderini,
L'anima andò dell'inferno alla bocca,
Ma Pluto le gridò : anima sciocca
Che inferno ? Va nel limbo de' bambini.

“ The night that Peter Soderini died, his soul went to the mouth of hell, but Pluto cried out to it, Silly soul, what hast thou to do in hell? Go into the limbo of children.”

set at liberty, he soon died. Soderini, not thinking himself very secure in Ragusa, from so violent a man, retired to Castelnuovo, a place subject to the Turks*.

After the departure of the gonfaloniere, conventions were entered into between the viceroy and the republic, that the Medicis should return to the city, but as private persons, with the obligation of joining the alliance, the payment of 140,000 ducats: 40,000 to the emperor, 80,000 to the army, and 20,000 to the viceroy. Twenty citizens were then chosen to make the necessary reforms, the most important of which was, that the office of gonfaloniere should last only for one year; and John Baptist Ridolfi was created.

In the mean time the cardinal, with the viceroy, and many officers and soldiers entered Florence with Julius, brother of the cardinal, and Lorenzo their nephew, son of Piero, twenty-three years of age. At first they evinced great private modesty: and presenting themselves to the signiors, almost in a suppliant tone, demanded pardon, and conditions to be given them, upon which they were to be legally restored to their country. But this moderation lasted only a very short time; since the Medicis, after weighing the circumstances, perceived, that the armed force being gone with the viceroy, they would remain private indeed, and they were ambitious of regaining their old authority: wherefore, concerting the measures to be taken, and the palace being filled with persons dependant upon them, and the viceroy himself demanding, in ambiguous words, that the house of Medicis should be protected in their native country, Julius got up, and made a proposal that the people should be called to council, which had been forbidden by the past govern-

* Nardi, History, book 5. Guicciard, book 11

ment, under the severest penalties, as it signified little less than a change of government. All the lovers of novelty approving it, and the timid or prudent, not daring to contradict, they saw immediately they would be obliged to return to the ancient method ; so that some of those persons, who without any principles, are fond of innovations only from interest, and who had distinguished themselves in the expulsion of the Medicis, approaching Julius with the meanest acts, entreated him to have them included in the authority (balia). The people were assembled in the square, and with the accustomed dramatic formalities, authority was given to the signiors, together with other forty-eight citizens, whereby all the supreme power, which can rest with the people, was transferred to that council, which was enabled to abrogate past laws, and make new ones. They acquired moreover, the important power of being confirmed again for the following year. The persons chosen were all friends and dependants upon the Medicis : these became the arbiters of the government, and thus they returned to the ancient system which had lasted from Cosmo, until the expulsion of Peter (Piero*.)

Thus was the Florentine liberty again oppressed by the cowardice and imbecility of the government; since, if when the Spanish arms became predominant in Italy, the government had immediately sought the friendship of the King of Spain or the Emperor, who offered them his protection for money, their liberty would have been saved with less expense than the loss of it cost them : nay, even in indolence, the King of Spain, who was not much pleased with the restoration of the Medicis to Florence, fearing by the influence of the cardinal that they

* Bonacco. Diar. Guicciard. History, book 11. Nardi, book 5.

would turn themselves too much towards the pope, whose ferocious disposition and dangerous designs he well knew, had latterly ordered the viceroy not to change the government of Florence. This order arrived too late: but the Florentines, either by using greater exertions with that king, or employing activity in providing themselves with able defenders, or if their rulers had possessed vigour, would have been saved*.

* *Guicciard. Hist. book 11.*

CHAPTER II.

DEATH OF JULIUS II.—AND HIS CHARACTER.—EXALTATION OF THE CARDINAL DE MEDICIS TO THE POPE-DOM.—TAKES THE NAME OF LEO X.—INVASION OF THE FRENCH.—DEATH OF LOUIS XII.—REIGN OF FRANCIS I. LORENZO DE MEDICIS COMMANDS THE FLORENTINE TROOPS IN LOMBARDY.—CELEBRATED BATTLE OF MARIGNANO.—MEETING OF FRANCIS AND LEO X., IN BOLOGNA.—FESTIVALS IN FLORENCE.—DEATH OF HIS BROTHER JULIUS, AND CHARACTER.—INVASION OF THE DUCHY OF URBINO.—ASSAULT UPON URBINO BY FRANCIS MARIA ROVERE.—DISSENSIONS IN HIS ARMY. HE RETIRES TO MANTUA.—CONSPIRACY OF THE CARDINAL PETRUCCI.—PUNISHMENT OF PETRUCCI AND HIS ACCOMPLICES.—DEATH OF LORENZO DE MEDICIS.—CARDINAL JULIUS' GOVERNMENT IN FLORENCE.—REFLECTIONS UPON THE QUALITIES AND ACTIONS OF LEO X.—HIS ALLIANCE WITH THE NEW EMPEROR, CHARLES V.—BEGINNING OF HOSTILITIES.—MORONE GETS POSSESSION OF MILAN.—DEATH OF THE POPE AND HIS CHARACTER.

THE re-establishment of the family of the Medicis at this time was not attended with those cruelties and ^{1512.} vexations which we have described at the return of Cosmo. The family Soderini, who were innocent and not very formidable, were alone expelled, or sent to the confines. The city, however, presented a melancholy aspect by the public sale in particular of the wretched spoils of the unfortunate Pratesi. John Baptist Ridolfi, who was chosen gonfaloniere for one year, seeing affairs so much changed, either from his own accord, or by the advice of others, laid down his office, and the ancient custom of appointing the gonfaloniere every two months,

was again resorted to. They were obliged to send to the pope two ambassadors, Jacop Salviati and Mathew Strozzi, to return him thanks for having deprived Florence of her liberty, and for having exposed Prato to so cruel a sacking. The rude pontiff, to whom every thing gave annoyance, found it strange and indecent in the Cardinal de Medicis to walk through Florence, surrounded by halberdiers, telling him, too, that he was made to destroy tyranny and not to tolerate it*. He, however, having finished the undertaking of plunging his country again into slavery, received an order to march against the Duke of Ferrara, who had escaped from a furious storm with which the pontiff had threatened him. This wise prince, shortly after the victory of the French at Ravenna, in which he had taken so great a part, foresaw their ruin, and endeavoured to come to an accommodation with the pope. Fabrizio Colonna, who had remained his prisoner, but was treated nobly by him, and set at liberty without ransom, undertook to conduct the agreement with the pope, and, in order more easily to remove all difficulties, obtained a *salvo condotto* and suspension of arms for the duke, who went to Rome: but scarce had he arrived there, when he learnt that the nephew of the pope, Francis Maria Rovere, with a perfidy unworthy of any prince, and particularly of the head of religion, had entered his territory with pontifical troops, and occupied Reggio, Carpi, Brescello, St. Felice, Finale and Cento. The pope, instead of availing himself of an excuse, and throwing the blame upon the arbitrary conduct of the general, with that unblushing pride which makes power think itself independent of the common rules of honesty, ordered the duke to cede to him Ferrara. Upon his

* Nardi, History, book 6.

refusal, and request to depart, the latter was denied him, against the very terms of the pass (*salvo condotto.*) The Colonna, and the Spanish ambassador, upon whose faith he had gone thither, reclaimed in vain; but the former, blushing to see the faith violated under their word, towards so respectable a prince, took him from Rome by force of arms to their estate of Marino, whence he arrived afterwards at Ferrara, deluding all the snares of the pontiff*, who now wished to despoil him of the remainder of his states, and therefore ordered the cardinal de Medicis to join the Duke of Urbino.

The more age weakened the corporeal powers of ^{1513.} the pontiff, the more his designs became vast. In his latter days, he had caused one of those bulls to be written founded upon imaginary rights, which the court of Rome has pretended to over all the kingdoms of the earth, daring thereby, to deprive the king of France of his crown, and aspiring to the title of liberator of Italy from barbarians. He meditated even the expulsion of the Spaniards from the kingdom of Naples†. Death alone broke his gigantic ideas on the 20th February. He was born more for a secular prince, than a peaceful head of the church. Throughout his reign, he only added fuel to discord and the fury of war. His pretensions to the title of liberator of Italy from the hands of the French were idle; since, as cardinal, he had been one of the most zealous promoters of the entry of Charles VIII.; and, as pope, he had accelerated the ruin of that republic which might have been the strongest bulwark of Italy. He deserves, indeed, praise for having been free from the common vice of pontiffs of aggrandizing and enriching their own families, ambition alone having induced him

* Guicciardini, book 11. † Guicciard: book. 11.

to labour greatly for the exaltation of the holy see, on which account that he might satisfy and provide for the Duke of Urbino, he had before his death secretly purchased Sienna from the emperor, and on his death-bed beseeched the college of cardinals to cede to him Pesaro in curacy ; reminding them, that, by his means the holy see had regained it*. He was a protector of the fine arts. To him the first temple of the world owes its origin, and the rude distinctions which he paid to Michael Angelo, in the midst even of his anger, prove in what esteem his ferocious mind held them†.

The cardinal of the Medicis now went to Rome. Shortly before this, a conspiracy, either real or pretended, against Julius and Lorenzo had been discovered, the ringleaders of which were Augustin Capponi and Peter Paul Boscoli, men of letters. A paper falling from the pocket of the latter, in which were mentioned the names of about twenty young Florentines, was brought to the government, and gave the hint that something of a conspiracy was contriving. Boscoli and Capponi being arrested, confessed only, according to the testimony of an historian of that age‡, that they had held discourses, in which they manifested their desire of reviving ancient liberty ; but the list furnished suspicions of something more. It appears, however, to have been only the beginning of a conspiracy, which was not far advanced, and it has not been clearly demonstrated, that the scope of it was the death of Julius and Lorenzo, as was universally asserted. Upon this supposition, however, Boscoli and Capponi were beheaded, and others sent to the confines or imprisoned, in order to strike terror into

* Guicciard, lib. 11. † Vasari, Life of Michael Angiolo.
‡ Nardi, History, book 6.

the malecontents by an act of severity*. In this list was the name of one of the most celebrated men of Tuscany, Nicholas Macchiavel†. It can hardly be believed that a man of so much sense would join a conspiracy of frivolous young men: but it is probable, that hearing him reason upon and read his fine discourses, upon Titus Livy in the *orti oricellarii*, they thought he was certainly of their party, and wrote down his name as such. The names of others, too, were probably written who had nothing to do with the conspiracy‡. Be it as it may, it cost Macchiavel a long persecution. He was imprisoned, and suffered torments like the rest, and was finally condemned to the galleys, from which he was liberated at the festivals, given for the election of Leo X. to the pontificate. Macchiavel then retired to his villa near San Casciano, where he wrote the work *Del Principe*, wherein he appears desirous of chanting a recantation,

* There exists a manuscript of Lucas della Robbia, who assisted Boscoli on the night before the execution to prepare him for death. This manuscript throws much light upon the conspiracy, confirms our opinion, and contains very curious circumstances: Boscoli demanded a Dominican confessor, and found difficulties in obtaining him, as well on the part of the government, as the friars, from different ends. The latter, always followers of the doctrine of Savonarola, and therefore lovers of the popular government, chose not to compromise themselves with a new one, which must naturally have watched over them. He finally obtained this confessor, and, from a conversation held a month afterwards by Lucas himself with that friar, it is inferred that the confessor possessed the sentiments of Savonarola, and considered Boscoli as a martyr to liberty. The manuscript acquires much authenticity from being quoted by the historian Nardi. The Archbishop Pazzi was also thought a participator in this conspiracy, but without proofs.

† Nerli, Comm. book 6.

‡ Nerli, loc. cit.

and retracting those energetic sentiments of liberty which he has taught elsewhere*.

In the meanwhile the Cardinal John de Medicis had approached Rome. He was attacked by a disease, for which malice assigned a cause which was not very decorous, particularly in a cardinal : but, although it may be probable enough that malice told a falsehood, there is great foundation for believing that to that disease he owed his exaltation to the pontificate ; since, in the contention, the cardinals easily agreed to the election of a person, of whom, although young, physicians were of opinion he could not survive but a few months †. He was elected pope after only seven days of conclave, and assumed the name of Leo X. This election received the greatest approbation, not only in his native country, in which the charities and magnificence displayed by the house were always in remembrance, but even from foreign nations, who still bore in memory his father Lorenzo, and great grandfather, Cosmo. As prelate and cardinal he had increased the predilections in his favour by the gentleness of his demeanour, and his readiness to lend his favour to

* From an unprinted but authentic letter of Macchiavel, which we copy at the end of the volume, as a document, we see the kind of life he led in the country : it may be that there is something allegoric in those piles of wood. It is written to the Florentine ambassador at Rome, Francis Vettori, under date of the 10th December 1513.

† Giovio, his panegyrist, attests that he was attacked by a tumour in the secret parts, which obliged him to travel slowly, and in a kind of sedan (lettiga). Paying no regard to the calumnies of Varillas, we may, as Giovio affirms, believe the tumour to have been in the anus, which, bursting, produced such a fetid smell in the conclave, as to make the death of the cardinal believed not far distant ; and that his partisans, and particularly the cunning Bibbiena, availed themselves of this means to cause him to be elected. It is certain the pope had always a fistula, a disease for which medicine in those times knew no radical cure.

all, even his enemies *. Florence was filled with joy: on every side were heard festive shouts, whilst the arms of the Medicis covered the houses, churches, and public places†. The city elected twelve ambassadors, to proceed with a congratulation to the new pope, amongst whom was Bernard Rucellai, whose wife was the daughter of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and consequently sister of the pope: but the atrabilious Bernard excused himself under pretence of sickness; the archbishop Pazzi, also elected, died; whence they were replaced by two others. We may imagine with what distinctions the pope received them, ordered all those suspected of the last conspiracy to be liberated from prison; recalled the exiled Soderini, and particularly Peter the gonfaloniere, who went to Rome, where he fixed his abode ‡. Julian, cousin of the pope, Jerusalemitan, prior of Capua, was created Archbishop of Florence, and shortly afterwards cardinal, together with two other Tuscans,

* The election was solemnized, particularly in the carnival and on St. John's day by the citizens, vying with each other in pompous festivals, exactly at a time when the city abounded with so many illustrious artists and learned men. The two companies of Broncone and Diamante particularly distinguished themselves, which may be read in detailed length in the life of Pontormo.

† Nardi relates that David Lomellino, a Genoese, said in the midst of the great festivals that were going on, “ You Florentines are much in the right to make festivals, not having had many popes, but before you have had as many as the city of Genoa, you will understand what effect the greatness of popes have had, or can have, upon free cities.”

‡ Pope Leo was wont to say, that, amidst so many hundreds of citizens, who went to visit him, he had only found two, who, omitting to speak of their own interests, had recommended to him that of their country. One highly wise, Peter Soderini, and the other notably mad, Anthony Cappucciaio called, Il Carafalla.—Nardi, History, book 6.

viz., Pucci Datario, afterwards treasurer, and Bernard Dovizi of Bibbiena, his ancient and faithful servant. Rarely had modern Rome seen a pomp equal to that with which Leo was crowned*. The solemn cavalcade took place on the same day on which the year before he had been made prisoner at the battle of Ravenna, and upon the same Turkish horse which he had purposely redeemed†. All the other cities of Tuscany vied with each other in festivals for the gladdening event. The Siennese, who were always rivals of the Florentines, regarded this election as dangerous to their liberty, seeing their own fate in that of Pisa, and having rational grounds to fear that Florence, by so powerful a support would reduce them to slavery; reading in their own thoughts those of the Florentines, who, if they wanted not the power, certainly were not without the will of making themselves masters of Sienna. In the embassy, they sent to the pontiff, they gave signs of their evil disposition, and in the festivals even, which they were obliged to make from decorum, they ingeniously manifested their fears‡.

* We have a minute description of it in the detail made by the eye-witness, John James Penni, to Contessina de Medicis, sister of the pontiff, and wife of Ridolfi. Amongst all the inscriptions, perhaps the most elegant and true was that of Agostino Ghigi, who, alluding to the two pontificates of Alexander and Julius said :

Olim habuit Cipris sua tempora, tempora mavors
Olim habuit sua, nunc tempora Pallas habet.

† Jov. Vita Leon. Guicciard. book 11. Ammir. book 29.—Guicciardino says of Cardinal Julius, who, at the coronation of the pope, carried the standard of the chevaliers of Rhodes, “ his wish inclined him to arms, but the fates drew him to a priest’s life.”

‡ The Trojan horse is said to have been brought into the city, by which they wished symbolically to warn the people of the danger public liberty was exposed to.

The only occurrence, of importance to the Florentines at this time, was the recovery of Pietra Santa and Muttone, which had been for a long time in the power of the Lucchese. Disputes arising about confines between the Bargigiani and the Lucchese, and two of the former being killed in an affray, the Florentines seized the opportunity of marching against Lucca, which, seeing no way of resisting the tempest, and fearing worse, contented herself with referring the matters pending between the two republics to the pope, although certain of having a decision against her; which, in fact, happened*.

Although Italy enjoyed sufficient tranquillity, rather from the weariness of parties who had been already exasperated, than from good-will, signs were not wanting, that they would not long delay to confront each other again. The King of France was highly irritated, by the very rapid loss he had suffered of the dukedom of Milan: the Venetians still smarted under the blows they had received: Maximilian was continually angry at them, but ready to sell his arms to the highest purchaser: the Swiss appeared to depend upon the nod of the pope, by whom, in payment of an annual stipend, they were declared defenders of the church. At the expulsion of the French, the allied powers had contended with each other, in tearing asunder the remnant of that state, and, from common jealousy, had suffered Milan, with a skeleton of the ancient duchy, to return to the family of Sforza. Maximilian, son of the Moor, alike weak in body as in mind, had been invested with it by the emperor; but, being taken and re-established in it by the Swiss, was rather their slave, than Lord of Milan. The

* Ammir. Ist. book 29.

King of France was meditating another invasion, by joining the Venetians, and inaking peace with the King of Spain, who, on that account, had abandoned the ancient alliance: but as his troops remained always in Lombardy, the designs of so dissimulating a sovereign were always dreaded. The new pontiff had not hitherto discovered his intentions, but he was not considered well-inclined towards the French, who had despoiled his family of the dominion of Florence, against whom, as legate, he had borne arms, and had been their prisoner*. But the King of France, thinking he ought no longer to delay, assembled a powerful army, and sent it into Italy, under the command of Monsieur de la Palisse, at the approach of whom, Milan declared in his favour. The Swiss, who ruled over that duchy under the name of Sforza, went to meet the French, attacked them near Novara, although in their trenches, and gave ^{1514.} them a memorable defeat, with the loss of artillery and baggage†; and thus this fresh invasion of Italy vanished almost before its commencement.

The pope, in the mean time, profiting of the disconcert of Lombardy, received the city of Modena as pledge from Maximilian, who was always in need of money; which city being united with Reggio, Parma, and Plaisance, might form a decent inheritance for one of his family, and probably for Julius. Shortly before the election of Leo, Julius and the brother had sent Vieri of the Medicis to Massa, to fix the matrimony, and espouse, in name of Julius, the daughter of the Marquis of Massa: but, scarce had the election taken place, seeing to what high rank the brother of the pope might have aspired, Vieri was hastily recalled, although he had

* Guicciard. Hist. book 11. Jov. Life of Leo X.

† Idem.

almost concluded every thing; and the treaty was broken*. He married, instead of her, Philibert, a daughter of Philip, Duke of Savoy, sister of the intriguing Louisa, mother of Francis I.; and becoming a near relation of the royal house of France, created prefect of Rome, general and gonfaloniere of the church. He appeared intended to occupy a rank almost royal. Florence and Tuscany remained in perfect tranquillity, whilst Lombardy was agitated by a most disastrous war, since, after a complete defeat of the French, their allies, the Venetians, had remained alone exposed to the violence of the enemy, amongst whom, besides the Swiss and the Germans, it was necessary to reckon also the Spaniards, who were unwilling to remain spectators of so many depredations, without participating in them.

In the mean time, Louis XII., King of France, died, and carried with him to the tomb the vain desire he had indulged, of vindicating his losses in Italy. He left no male issue. With the vain hope of having sons, he had married in his latter years the beautiful Mary of England, sister of the king, Harry the Eighth; nay, it is thought that the excessive caresses he paid his young wife accelerated his death. His kingdom devolved upon the Duke d' Angouleme, who was called Francis I. He had already married Claudia, daughter of the deceased Prince; a young man of a generous disposition and warlike turn of mind, whence it appeared not that this change would contribute to the tranquillity of Europe, and particularly of Italy. The new king sounded the desire of the pope, to join with him in alliance, as he was already joined in kindred. The pope, although the alliance could not

* Nardi Hist. book 6.

displease him, which would have served to aggrandize his house, detested, however, like a good Italian, that any other prince than an Italian should be established in Italy. He might, moreover, entertain fears, that upon the French prevailing, he would have difficulty to retain Parma and Plaisance.

In the midst of these troubles, which threatened Italy, the Florentines, unwilling to be unprovided, assembled their troops and made Lorenzo de Medicis supreme commander over them; who, as the appearances of war increased, and the pope was obliged to act as member of the ancient alliance, marched into Lombardy to join the viceroy; but received from the pope directions to act with the greatest caution, rather as a neutral, and, if necessary, as a mediator, than an enemy; and make the King of France believe that these troops were going to garrison the cities of Lombardy, and keep them to their duty*. Lorenzo arrived at Plaisance with five hundred lancers, as many bodies of light horse, and 6,000 infantry. King Francis, greedy of glory and of conquest, was approaching Italy with a numerous army. The defence of the Milanese depended upon the Swiss, who ruled there more than Sforza. They had taken up a position towards Susa, where the two usual roads meet by the Mount Cenis and Mount Geneva, waiting the appearance of the French on that side, to attack them with the advantage of ground: not thinking the passage for such an army was elsewhere possible, and particularly for artillery. Trivulzio, who was well acquainted with all the passes, led the French army by another road, where troops laden with arms and baggage had hitherto never passed, but was ex-

* Guicciard. Hist. book 12. Jovi Vita Leonis.

posed, however, to the most painful fatigue between the Cozian and the Maritime Alps. Saluzzo, and the rear-guard, led on by Palisse, fell so unexpectedly upon a corps commanded by Prospero Colonna, at Villafranca, where it was doing duty with Maximilian Sforza, that he routed him, and made Colonna prisoner, with a number of officers*. The whole army, afterwards led on by the young king, penetrated into the Milanese, and the celebrated battle was fought near Marignano with the Swiss, who, inferior in number and not united, sustained, nevertheless, the French attack with the greatest valour, and placed the king himself in the greatest danger. The battle lasted two days, and both sides gave proofs of the most consummate courage. The Swiss being finally obliged to give way, retired in the best order, but with immense loss.

The pontiff, employing his usual dissimulation, foreseeing that fortune would attend the French arms from the first misfortune that happened to Colonna, secretly sent one of his intimate friends, Cintio, to treat with the king for an accommodation. He continued, however, prolonging the treaty, and deferring the conclusion, in order to see the issue of his arms. Hearing the complete victory he had gained, the agreement was immediately concluded by means of the Bishop of Tricarico, pontifical nuncio, and the Duke of Savoy, as Cintio was invested with no public character. The two sovereigns bound themselves in alliance, binding themselves to the defence of their own Italian states, and the king, moreover, to

* Jov. Hist. lib. 15. Guicciard. lib. 12. The astonishing fatigues of this march of King Francis I. across horrible passes, the transport of artillery, &c., are minutely described by Giovio, which deserves to be attentively read, to compare this march with what has happened in later times.

the protection of the pope, of Julius, and Lorenzo, and of the Florentines, with other conditions advantageous to them. The pope, however, was obliged to restore Parma and Plaisance, as an appendage of the dukedom of Milan, which it would have been difficult to contend for with a victorious king. Lorenzo, chosen ambassador of the Florentines, went, by order of the pontiff, his uncle, to the King of France, with whom he agreed for an interview with the pope in Bologna. In a short time the whole Milanese was occupied by the French, Sforza, shut up in the castle of Milan, surrendered, after a little ceded his states to Francis, and retired to France with the pension of 30,000 ducats*. He was not endowed with any of the qualities necessary for the post he occupied, particularly in such difficult times. He was raised to it by the emperor, and sustained by the Swiss, in order that they themselves might reign under the shadow of a name, which shadow disappeared with the dissipation of the Swiss force.

The pope put himself in route for the congress at Bologna with king Francis, although at the beginning of the winter. He left Rome on the 6th November, accompanied by eighteen cardinals, with a retinue adapted to the rank of such illustrious travellers, and was met on the confines by six Florentine ambassadors, amongst whom was the historian Guicciardini. He took the road of Cortona, Arezzo, and Montevarchi†. Arrived at the

* Guicciard. Hist. lib. 12. Jov. Vita Leo. X. Ammir., lib. 29.

† The Siennese historian Malevolti says, that the pope not having taken the road of Sienna, this republic thought he had no good intentions towards her. Cambi, a writer of those times, asserts that after the Siennese had made preparations, and bridges over the rivers he was to pass, they intimated to him to come with a small retinue, on account of the scarcity of provisions.

Madonna dell' Impruneta, he stopped three days at Marignolle, in the villa of Gianfigliazzi, in order to give time for finishing the pompous preparations, which the continual rains had interrupted*. He made his entrance on the last day of November, the day of St. Andrew. Columns, triumphal arches, magnificent tapestry, the richest decorations adorned the street through which the pope passed with his noble retinue under the canopy which was carried by the colleges: around the chair of the pope, were the nobility and gentry; another empty chair followed behind, which was carried by turns by one hundred Florentine youths richly and uniformly attired. The entry gate of S. Pier Gattolini had been thrown to the ground, and a triumphal arch erected in its place. There were others at the square of S. Felix†, at the gallery of the Frescobaldi, past the bridge of St. Trinita, at the square of the signiors, and elsewhere; and the façade of the cathedral was adorned with an elegant design which might have been made use of when it was incrusted with marbles‡. After visiting the cathedral the pope took up his usual abode of the pontiffs at S. Maria Novella, but on the following day went to the paternal house, where his brother Julius was languishing with a lingering disease. Two days afterwards, he departed for Bologna, which he entered on the 7th December. He

* Besides an inscription, which attests the sojourn of the pope in this villa, there is the following distich :

*Dulcis et alta quies Decimo pergrata Leoni,
Hic fuit: hinc sacrum jam reor esse locum.*

† Upon this arch was placed the statue of Lorenzo the Magnificent, father of the pope, with the words *Hic est filius meus dilectus*.

‡ Cambi, above every other, has minutely described the entry of Pope Leo into Florence. Nardi asserts there were seven arches, four representing the cardinal virtues, and three, the theological, and that at each of those arches were sung verses adapted to that virtue.

was received with no great applause ; on the contrary, the people, who were always attached to the Bentivoglio, whose arms were a saw, shouted *Close, close, (serra, serra)*.

Here King Francis came to meet him, and common interests were treated of*. The pope, knowing the ardent desire the young king possessed to re-conquer the kingdom of Naples, which he considered an inheritance of the crown of France, endeavoured to dissuade him, and if he was not able to turn him from it, induced him to defer his design, at least during the life of Ferdinand, the end of which appeared not far distant. The interests of the house of Medicis were not forgotten at this meeting, to which the king promised honourable establishments, recommending, however, the holy father to restore Modena and Reggio to the Duke of Ferrara, which was promised and not maintained, and the pardon of the Duke of Urbino, which was refused, but in the mildest manner†. Upon the return of the pope to Florence, the citizens renewed their festivals, and he was very prodigal of his favours to that city, and particularly to S. Maria del Fiore (where he had been canon), of honours and spiritual treasures. Amongst other gifts was a

^{1516.} mitre, covered with pearls, rubies, emeralds, and diamonds of inestimable value.

The pomp and the presence of his brother, who was constituted in the highest dignity, relieved not Julius from the infirmity which was conducting him slowly to the tomb. He had shortly before received the title of Duke of Nemours from the King of France, and all remedies being found of no avail, he died soon after the

* Ammir. History, book 29. Nardi, History, book 6.

† Guicciard. History, book 12.

departure of the pope, on the 17th March, in the abbey of Fiesole, where he had been carried to breathe a better air, universally lamented, at the early age of thirty-seven years, leaving only a natural son born during his exile at Urbino, who became afterwards the Cardinal Hippolitus.

Julius was endowed with amiable qualities, with a taste for letters and the fine arts, a taste almost hereditary in the Medicean family*. A rigid observer of the principles of honesty, he had not the strength, or rather he knew not how, to overcome the disgust which is excited in a generous mind at the crime which leads to greatness.

As long as he was alive, therefore, he diverted the pope from persecuting the Duke of Urbino, by whom, in his exile, he had been received with munificent and friendly hospitality, and with whom he had probably passed his happiest days. He was also bewailed, because his authority was still some restraint upon the pride of Lorenzo, who, as the son of Peter, imitated more the father than the uncles. He alone, in preference to every other, inherited the honourable paternal title of Magnificent, given

* Bembo in his *Proses*, introduces him as one of the most learned speakers. Castiglione in his *Cortigiano*, as one of the most cultivated of the company; an homage which they offered to merit, since those serious writers would have made themselves too ridiculous in the face of the public, if they had known his incapacity and imbecility.—Ariosto, quoted by us elsewhere, says, in satire III :

E prima che gli aprissero le porte
I Fiorentini, quando il suo Giuliano
Si Riparò nella Feltresca Corte
Ove col formator del Cortigiano
Col Bembo e gli altri sacri al divo Apollo
Facea l'esilio suo men duro e strano.

Some of his sonnets are preserved in the Laurentian library. In the library of Strozzi, are also some of his manuscript poems. A sonnet mentioned in the illustration of the letters of Castiglione, and in the

him by the public voice*, and transmitted it to his son. The ode, written by Ariosto to the widow Philibert, where his praises are genteelly interwoven with those of the husband, was dictated to that poet by the merit of Julius ; not by flattery, since Ariosto served the court of Ferrara, which was no friend to the house of Medicis. Florence had never seen so pompous a funeral as that with which Julius was conducted to the tomb. This melancholy procession, which accompanies the pride and vanity of the powerful, even to the borders of the sepulchre, went through those frequented streets of Florence,

commentary to the Stanzas of Cesar Gonzaga, upon contempt of death, may pass amongst the best of that time ; it is full of strong sentiments, which are not often found in the flat verses of that age :

Non è viltà, nè da viltà procede
 S'alcun per evitar più crudel sorte
 Odia la propria v ta, e desia morte
 Se senza alcun rimedio il suo mal vede
 Ma bene è vil chi senza affanno crede
 Travagliar manco in vita, e si conforte
 Dicendo : io vivo : ah menti poco accorte
 Che avete in fedel morte poca fede !
 Meglio è morire all' animo gentile
 Che sopportare inevitabil Danno,
 Che lo faccia cambiar animo e stile
 Quanti ha la morte già tratti d'affanno !
 Ma molti, ch' hanno il chiamar morte a vile
 Quanto talor sia dolce ancor non sanno.

“ It is not cowardice, nor does it proceed from cowardice, if any one, in order to avoid a more cruel fate, hates his own life, and desires death, if he sees his own evil without any remedy : but mean is he indeed who thinks without troubles to labour less in life, and comforts himself by saying, I live ; O little discerning minds, what little faith you put in faithful death ! It is better for a genteel mind to die, than to support inevitable mischief, which may make him change his heart and manners : how many has death already snatched from ills ! But many, who call death mean, little know how sweet it then becomes.”

* Nardi, History, book 6. Ammir., book 29. Jov. Vita Leon, Guicciard. Hist. book 12.

where, about three months before, he had passed in triumph*.

With the loss of this protector, the Duke of Urbino lost all his hopes. He was accused of various crimes, some of which were already pardoned him by Julius although they appeared clear pretexts for complaint†. His real crime was the possession of the dukedom of Urbino, which he wished to despoil him of, in order to give it to the family of Medicis. His ruin was decided upon, and upon it the aggrandizement of Lorenzo. One of the persons who were most ardent in desiring it, and who most stimulated the pope, was Alfonsina Orsini, mother of Lorenzo. Not content that her son, under the appearance and modest title of citizen, was prince and arbiter of the Florentine republic, she loved the name, and the splendour of, sovereign. That unfortunate duke did not contend against the arms which Lorenzo brought against him: incapable of resistance, nor wishing to expose his subjects to the evils of war, that good prince retired to Mantua to his father-in-law. The occupation of that state cost only four days: the fortresses resisted but little more. The longest defence was made by that of San Leo, which from its mountainous situation, was considered invincible. A carpenter, nevertheless, excavated in the stone with laborious diligence, and having affixed ladders where it appeared impossible to hold them, a force was thereby conducted to the summit at night, which got

^{1517.} possession of the fort‡. The pope invested Lorenzo his nephew with the duchy of Urbino and its

* Cambi, History.

† Guicciard. Hist. book 12, Nardi at the place quoted.

‡ Guicciard. Hist. book 12. Porcacchi in the note, says th it was a certain Bastiano Magno of Castiglione.—Nardi, on the contrary, makes mention of a native of Fiesole.

dependencies: after which acquisition he went to Rome, and received the baton of general of the church, which was possessed by the deceased Julius*.

Lorenzo enjoyed not the possession of the dukedom so quietly as the affairs of Italy promised, which were calmed; on the contrary, peace in other parts occasioned war in the duchy of Urbino. Some Spanish troops, to whom war proved a lucrative profession, and who lamented to see it terminated, listened to the propositions secretly made them by Francis Maria Rovere, to attack the duchy of Urbino. They had borne arms in Lombardy, particularly before Verona, and were commanded by the Spaniard Maldonato †. Francis, being assisted by the gold of persons who were not well affected to the pope and his family, by the Lord of Bozzola, by the Duke of Ferrara, probably, and his father-in-law, with about 8,000 men, picked and brave troops, advanced with such rapid marches that the duchy of Urbino was invaded almost before the Medicis had any account of it. The hatred the inhabitants bore towards their new masters, made them joyfully receive their ancient lord. Lorenzo de Medicis and the pope were struck with surprise and terror, since it might be doubted too, whether King Francis, towards whom the pope had not observed all the conditions of the alliance, might favour this movement. They had no troops of sufficient valour to oppose the veteran Spaniards. They endeavoured to compensate for it by number, but the enemy had been already received in Urbino; and with the exception of Pesaro, Sinigaglia, Gradata, and Mondavio, places separated from the

* Guicciard. Hist. lib. 13. Ammir. book 29. Jov. History and Life of Leo X.

† Jov. Life of Leon. book 3.

Duchy, the remainder returned to the power of Francis, with the same rapidity by which they had been lost, except the fortress of San Leo. Lorenzo de Medicis, not comprehending military operations, was obliged to refer to the counsels of others.

The war was carried on by various little actions which are hardly worthy of observation. Francis Maria sent a challenge to Lorenzo, wherein he invited him to terminate their differences in single combat, and spare the blood of their subjects, which Lorenzo accepted, but pretended that his rival ought first to leave the states which, according to him, he held unjustly; a pretext to elude the challenge. Nay, after having given the safe passport to the bearers of the manifesto, he broke his faith as usual, and caused them to be thrown into prison by the advice of Renzo of Ceri.

The historian blushes almost for humanity dishonoured in repeating so frequently instances of violated faith, which excite wonder, that either courage should any longer be found to pledge it, or the simplicity to trust to it. Lorenzo probably wished by his threats and torments to discover the secret friends of the duke*. But if he refused to fight hand in hand, he proved by fact, that it proceeded not from want of courage, because at the siege of Mandolfo he exposed himself so far as to receive a bad wound by a ball in the head, and being obliged to suffer himself to be taken to Ancona, it was believed at Florence for several days that he was dead, and the citizens were quite astonished when they saw him again†. Such dissensions now broke out in the army,

* Guicciard. Hist. book 13. Suarez was liberated at the urgent request of various officers who reclaimed, and his secretary retained with many horses.

† Cambi, History.

that the troops, consisting of various nations, were hardly appeased by the authority of the first generals. The cardinal of Bibbiena, who was sent to the army by the pope as his legate, made use of such methods that he finally quieted them. These disconcerts gave courage to the enemy, who became masters of the country. But what arms could not effect, gold could. The pope endeavoured to gain the leaders of the enemies' troops. They had sold themselves to Francis Maria Rovere, and were to be resold to a larger bidder. Nevertheless the conspiracy being discovered the first time by the duke, he had the strength to rouse the honour of the troops, who, getting acquainted with the treachery of some of their captains from some intercepted letters of Maldonato, Suarez, and others, surrounded them suddenly and stabbed them: the duke valiantly followed up his enterprise, entered Tuscany, and carried great dismay into Florence*. The loyalty of the troops could

* We are here presented with a singular anecdote. Whilst they were dreading an invasion in Tuscany, arms were sent particularly to Arezzo, which, since the last rebellion, had been disarmed: many loads of lances arriving there were greedily taken up by the Aretine youth to defend themselves. Scolaco Spini, captain, and Francis Serristori, commissary, issued a proclamation that the lances should be brought back to the palace, and all were returned except ten: another proclamation was issued, that if they were not brought back on the following day, whoever retained them would be punished with strappado, and a premium of a dollar in gold for a lance, to be paid to whoever accused them: ten priests were found to have retained the lances. The fact being verified, they suffered the punishment, but thought of taking revenge: and on the morning of the Corpus Domini, the captain and the mayor wishing to enter the church, the vicar of the bishop caused mass to be stopped, saying they were excommunicated, whereby they were to return home affronted: but from the shame offered them in public, having called the vicar, they caused him to receive five strappadoes, and obliged him to give them again the communion.—Cambi, History.

not resist the want of money of their general, and the temptation the pope held out to them of paying them generously. Francis Maria was again obliged, therefore, to abandon his states, with the sad condition of being suffered to depart freely for Mantua, and carry his property with him; amongst which he forgot not two objects which prove two generous passions to have predominated in that illustrious house, viz., his artillery and his select and princely library*. This war cost not less than 800,000 ducats, which were spent for the most part by the Florentines.

During the war of Urbino a conspiracy was discovered against the life of the pontiff. In order to comprehend the thread thereof, it becomes necessary to turn a little back, and refer to the events of Sienna. Pandolph Petrucci, who governed his country with so much sense and prudence during his whole life, left three sons; Borghese the elder twenty-two years old; Alphonso, whom Pope Julius made cardinal; and Fabio, who was still a minor. Borghese inherited not the talents of his father with his honours. He entered indeed into the magistracy with the paternal authority, but the discontented and outlaws knowing the scanty talents he possessed, took courage. The pope, who saw of what importance it was to regulate at his will that republic which was placed between the ecclesiastical and Florentine states, after making an alliance with the former, seeing the incapacity of Borghese and the little esteem in which his citizens held him, thought of changing the rulers, and sending a man fit to govern it, who would be at the same time his dependant. This was Raphael Petrucci, bishop of Groseto and governor of Castel S. Angelo, his old friend, who had many

* Guicciard. Hist., book 13. Jov. Vita Leon X. 3 and 4.

favourites in Sienna, who invited him to take possession of the post held by Borghese his cousin with the same authority. All the outlaws and malecontents were ready to join and favour him. The treaty was made manifest, particularly when the bishop marched towards Sienna with 2,000 infantry and 200 horse, commanded by Vitello Vitelli. Borghese, after some consultations, perceiving the mind of the citizens alienated from him, deprived of aid and counsel, (since Venafro, the only friend who was attached to him, and who foretold his near ruin, had been obliged to leave Sienna for the same end), resolved upon flying and carrying with him his only brother Fabio, and leaving the remainder of his family at the discretion of the enemy. Castellano arrived, entered Sienna, and assumed the reins of government without difficulty, and the greater part of the outlaws re-entering with him. A reformation was made in the government: a magistracy of ninety citizens was chosen with the same authority as the past had enjoyed. The sons of Pandolfo were persecuted with the usual injustice. Borghese and Fabio, flying to Naples, were declared rebels*.

This loss of the authority of his family, of which the pope had been the author, so greatly wounded the Cardinal Petrucci, that, although he had been one of the partisans in the election, it induced him to attempt a crime which is always infamous, but particularly so upon the person of a pontiff—that of putting him to death. With him were united other cardinals. Various methods were devised of getting rid of him; and Petrucci, transported by youthful anger, confessed he had been often tempted to kill him with his own hands in the consistory. He had finally suborned an able sur-

* Malevo. His. Sen. lib. 7. of the third part.

geon, surnamed Baptist of Vercelli, to cause his fistulous wound, with which the pope had been for a long time afflicted, to be poisoned. Petrucci, exalting the skill of Baptist, had succeeded in persuading the whole court of the pope to dismiss the old surgeon, and confide the care of the wound to a new one. But the almost female modesty of the pope, who was not pleased to expose the secret parts to the view of a new operator, opposed this. The conspiracy being discovered from the intercepted letters of Nini, the cardinal's secretary, the cardinal, the secretary, and the surgeon, were arrested; they confessed, under tortures, both the crime they had been guilty of, and made known their accomplices. The consistory being assembled, and the pope complaining of his fate, exposed the order of the conspiracy,—adding, that in that same place there were cardinals guilty of the crime whom he would pardon if they would freely confess. Whereupon Soderini and the Cardinal di Corneto got up, and prostrating themselves before him demanded his pardon. A process was made in solemn form, and the arrest of the Cardinals Sauli and Riario also followed. Petrucci was strangled in prison*; Nini and the surgeon were publicly drawn in quarters†. Of the other cardinals, one was shut up in prison, the other deprived of his hat. All, however, after some time, were set at liberty, and restored to their former honours, upon paying the fine of very large sums of money,—ex-

* We must correct Voltaire, who, in his “*Essai sur les meurs et l'esprit des Nations*,” speaking of this fact, puts the Cardinal Poli instead of Petrucci.

† Guicciardini substitutes for Nini one Pocaintesta da Bagna Cavallo, a friend of the house of Petrucci; mentioned, too, as such by Malivolti in his History of Siena: but in this business Giovio must have been better informed.

cept the Cardinal Corneto, who, not trusting himself, fled, and appeared no more upon the theatre of the world. It is pretended that, as he carried with him great treasures, and was very rich, he was assassinated. He was a man who had arrived at fortune by his merits and abilities: few writers at the elegant court of Leo equalled him, and none surpassed him. Nor could the pontiff otherwise than observe, that in punishing the Cardinal Riario, more from suspicion than a real crime, the memory of the murder of his uncle Julius, and the conspiracy of the Pazzi, had a share in it*. He was, on account of the riches which he possessed, the authority and offices he enjoyed, the first cardinal; and the luxury of his house yielded alone to that of the pontiff, to whose chair he so long aspired in vain†.

The friendship with the King of France brought the house of Medicis both honours and riches. Lorenzo departed with a magnificent train of equipages to travel in France, with the double character of husband ^{1518.} of Magdalen of Brittany, relation of the royal house, and to do the honours of the pontiff by standing godfather to the son of the king. He there displayed that sumptuous luxury which the world was accustomed to admire in the Medicean house in the festivals celebrated for two joyful events at the court of Francis, which loaded Lorenzo with honours. Upon his return to Florence, disgusted at his fellow-citizens for not having

* Giovio, on the contrary, says that the pope did not choose to proceed more harshly against him, in order not to appear to vindicate the ancient wrongs of the family Riario: so true is it, that every one sees things through that coloured glass which party places under his eyes.—Jov. Life of Leo X.

† che d' aver bramato

Tanto invano il Riario si martira.—*Arios. Satir.*

chosen to do him honours, by sending him an embassy upon approaching the city, he made Lanfredini and Salviati, who had opposed the proposition of sending him ambassadors, by saying, that as he was a citizen like the others, it was not fitting to do so, feel his indignation. They were, therefore, both of them removed from the government*.

His pride and imperious manners were a presage of the slavery of Florence. The wisest citizens saw no means of avoiding it, as the King of France and the pope conspired to support the government of Lorenzo, when his death freed them from this alarm. An indecent disease, which had been shortly before discovered, with which nature appears willing to control irregular passions, brought him to the grave. His wife

Magdalen had died seven days before him, after a ^{1519.} year of matrimony, and having given a female to the world, who afterwards became the celebrated Catherine, Queen of France. Nor was it long before Magdalen Cibo, sister of Leo, and afterwards the mother of Lorenzo Alfonsina, also died. Great fortunes and great hopes rising and vanishing with this rapidity almost, at one time, sufficiently evinced the vanity of all human greatness†.

* Cambi, History, Ammir. History, book 29.

† We cannot refrain from repeating a very pretty fable of Ariosto, wherein this greatest imitator of the discourses of Horace describes the rapidity and passing fleetness of these fortunes in the house of Medicis,—Satir. 7.

Fu già una Zucca, che monto sublime
 In pochi giorni tanto che coperte
 A un pero suo vicin l' ultime cime.
 Il pero una mattina gli occhi aperse
 Ch' avea dormito un lungo sonno, e visti
 I nuovi frutti sul capo sederse,
 Le disse: Chi sei tu? come salesti

Quassù?

Lorenzo was haughty and overbearing. He considered the Florentine republic as his own patrimony, of which he could freely dispose, trampling even upon the republican forms, and not using in his violence even that decorum which his superiors had employed, to make the deluded people believe they lived in liberty: hence his death was not bewailed like that of Julius. All public affairs were transacted by his creatures; and particularly by Goro of Pistoia. In his latter years, he only admitted a few relations or a buffoon to his presence. Cardinal Julius himself coming to visit him, is said to have returned to Rome displeased with him. The disease of his nephew increasing, he returned to Florence; and, after the death of his nephew, employed himself in

Quassù? dov' eri dianzi quando lasso
 Al sonno abandonai quest' occhi tristi?
 Ella gli desse il nome, e dove al basso
 Fu piantata mostrolli, e che in tre mesi
 Quivi era giunta, accelerando il passo.
 Ed io, l' arbor soggiuase, appena ascesi
 A quest' altezza, poich' al caldo, al gelo
 Con tutti i venti trenta anni contesi.
 Ma tu, che a un volger d' occhi arrivi in cielo
 Renditi certa che non meno in fretta
 Che sia cresciuta, mancherà il tuo stelo.

* * * * *

Chi avesse avuto lo spirto di Carlo
 So sena allora avrà a Lorenzo forse
 Detto, quando il senti Duca chiamarlo
 Ed avrà detto al Duca di Nemorse
 Al Cardinal de' Rossi, ed al Bibbiena
 A cui meglio era esser rimaso a Torse
 E detto a Contessina ed a Maddalena
 Alla nuora, alla surcera, ed a tutta
 Quella famiglia d' allegrezza piena;
 Questa similitudine sia iuauuta
 Più propria a voi, che come vostra gioia
 Tosto mostrò, tosto sarà distrutta.
 Tutti morrete, ed è fatal che moja
 Leon appresso, prima ch' otto volte
 'Torni in quel segno il fondator di Troia, &c.

the government of the city, but with that modesty and moderation which Lorenzo was so little acquainted with. He left the choice of magistrates to chance, according to the ancient usage ; who, however, had the prudent caution of consulting him in important affairs. The wisdom of his government made him admired and beloved by the Florentines, who were not wont to be easily contented. In conferring employments, he sought rather modest, deserving persons, than the crowd of impudent flatterers who besieged him. Provided with ample church revenues, and the large Medicean patrimony, he had no necessity of employing the public property for his own account. His court was formed of wise and dutiful ecclesiastics, and his society of select and learned men, avoiding buffoons and flatterers. During his government, besides various works of public utility, Florence was fortified by the advice and direction of Peter Novarra, who enjoyed the reputation of the most skilful of his age in the art of fortifications ; and by the confession even of those who, not well affected to the family of the Medicis, rarely had the city of Florence been governed with so much prudence*. Whether, when he afterwards became pope, he preserved the same sentiments towards his native country, we shall see in its proper place.

Leo X., seeing the principal foundation upon which he wished to raise his family, lost by the death of Lorenzo, joined the dukedom of Urbino to the holy see—leaving, however, Montefeltro with the parishes of Sestina and San Leo to the Florentine republic, a slight indemnity for the heavy expense incurred in conquering it.

* Nardi, Book 7.—Observe that this writer was no friend of the family of Medici.

After adjusting the affairs of the republic, the Cardinal de Medicis returned to Rome, leaving the Cardinal of Cortona, Silvio Passerini, an old friend of the pope* to fill his place.

Pope Leo, who is interesting to us both as a Florentine, and master, at this time, of Tuscany, appears not, under political points of view, in the best light before the tribunal of history, which possesses the right of judging alike of the actions of kings and ministers, of heroes and the cowardly. Intent upon reconquering the states, which he said belonged to the holy see, he was not very delicate about the means, so that he obtained his end. John Paul Baglioni ruled, or rather tyrannized over, Perugia. His scandalous life, and overbearing conduct, certainly deserved chastisement. It was not easy to get a brave man into his hands, who would have defended himself by all possible means. The pope, therefore, invited him to Rome, promising him reconciliation and security; but Baglioni sent his son in his place, who was, indeed, loaded with caresses by the pope; but he wanted to get the father into his hands. Being recalled thither by new attestations of security, upon Leo asserting to the son that, without his father's presence, affairs could not be settled,—and, probably, as many attest, trusting to a Salvocondotto,—he finally fell into the snare. Baglione went to Rome, was received affectionately the first day by the pope, and kissed his foot; but was on the second day arrested and beheaded. Various other little tyrants, both of Fermo, Recanati, &c., met with the same fate, either by force or deceit, and probably deserved it; but treachery is at all times infamous.

* Ammir. Hist. book 29.

The attempt made at occupying Ferrara, and of treacherously putting the duke to death, by endeavouring to suborn a German captain of the duke's guard, was still more scandalous. Guicciardini, the historian, who governed Modena and Reggio for the pope, found himself involuntarily involved in this black attempt, which vanished, from the honourable captain, who feigned for some time to adhere to it, in order to discover all its threads, unfolding it to the duke*. It is the duty of the historian not to fail to expose these crimes, and often repeat them to the public, as the only chastisement which the powerful, who are not subjected to the laws, can receive in the execration of posterity, if, indeed this execration can prove a prevention of fresh crimes.

By the death of his nephew and his wife, the ties of Leo with France appeared to be dissolved. The liberty of Italy was still, however, at his heart, and he unwillingly saw the Milanese in the hands of the French, and with still greater displeasure, Parma and Plaisance, ^{1521.} which he pretended belonged to the holy see. To these motives, probably, was added the pride, with which Lautrec, Governor of Milan, treated the ministers of the pope, who had to treat with him. The interests, moreover, and the situation of Europe, became greatly changed at a moment. Fortune had suddenly created the most formidable power that had existed in Europe since the reign of Charlemagne, by uniting, in the person of Charles of Austria, the dominion over the most extensive provinces. The nephew of the weak and poor Maximilian, found himself, on a sudden, King of Spain, and Lord of the American

* Guicc. book 13.

possessions, master of Austria, and other hereditary states of that house in Germany, besides the rich and beautiful provinces of the Low Countries. When the historian observes how great the strokes of fortune were, by which such immense provinces were united under the command of that boy, he cannot fail to recognise what historians have called the *propitious star* of the house of Austria*. Charles had succeeded, since the year 1516, to the rich inheritance, by the death of Ferdinand, his grandfather. This new and extraordinary power, or the complexion of all the causes we have mentioned, invited the pope, probably, to change system. Be it as it may, Leo made an alliance with the new emperor, Charles, V., by which the latter bound himself to defend Florence, the house of the Medicis,

* Maximilian, Duke of Austria, was called, from his poverty, *Maximilian without money*. He married Mary of Burgundy, only daughter of Charles the Bold, whom the extravagant Louis XI., King of France, might have easily given in marriage to the dauphin, his son, and thus peaceably united the rich succession of Flanders, of Burgundy, and Franche Comté, to the kingdom of France. But he chose rather to make war upon that duke, and lose the greater part of these rich dominions. In order that the succession of Spain might afterwards fall upon Charles, Isabella succeeded to the kingdom of Castile, and the daughter of her brother Harry was declared illegitimate by the states which placed her on the throne: nor was all this sufficient. The brother of Ferdinand, husband of Isabella, died without issue, who left him the kingdom of Arragon, the son of Ferdinand and Isabella died, and the imbecile Jane remained heiress, from whom, being married to Philip, son of Maximilian, Charles was born. But this is not all: at the death of Isabella, the old Ferdinand, marrying again with Germana di Fois, had a son, who died, and through all these events, in a very short time, these vast and rich provinces came into the hands of a youth of sixteen years of age. Amongst the many historians who recount these events, we may consult Robinson's History of Charles V., vol. 2, book 1.

and the holy see. It was agreed that another Sforza viz., Francis, son of Louis the Moor, should be declared Duke of Milan: the Swiss, too, entered the alliance, and a large corps of them were taken into pay of the pope, who endeavoured to keep the league secret, but it was soon made known*.

The Venetians remained allies of the French. The Duke of Ferrara, knowing the inutility of his neutrality, since he had evident proofs that his states and his life had been often aimed at by the pontiff, declared himself, with arms in his hands, in favour of the French, and hostilities commenced. Parma was besieged by the Spanish and pontifical troops, but was soon liberated. Dissensions had arisen between the captains of the pontifical colleagues, when the pope sent orders to the Cardinal de Medicis, who was already returned to Florence, to go to the army as his legate, and in fact he succeeded in removing every asperity between Prospero Colonna and the Marquis of Pescara. Their force being, in the mean time, augmented by the arrival of a considerable body of Swiss, whilst the French was diminished, from another corps of that nation having retreated, the latter could no longer confront the enemy, and were obliged to fall back upon Milan. The Marquis of Pescara then advancing towards this city with two hundred horse and 3,000 Spanish infantry, routed a French corps, which came out to meet him, courageously attacked the Roman gate with the corresponding suburb, which was particularly defended by the Venetians, and, after an obstinate contest, attended with great slaughter, remained master of it†. The governor, seeing no hopes of holding it

* Guicciar. Hist. book 13 and 14. Jov. Life Leon. and Piscar.

† Guicciar. book 14. Jov. Life Leo X. and Pisch.

any longer, abandoned the city, leaving the castle stored with ammunition. Morone took possession of the city for Duke Sforza, according to convention, and the greater part of the Lombard cities, following the fortune of arms, rebelled from the French.

The pope received the glad tidings of having recovered Parma and Plaisance, but death overtook him on the 1st December, in the midst of prosperity, in the 46th year of his age; an immature death, particularly for a pontiff. It was suspected he died of poison, and probably not without foundation. It is true that he was attacked with an habitual disease, a fistula, which the art of surgery had not hitherto succeeded in curing effectually; it is true that he had begun to languish, under a slight fever, since the 25th of November: but death, which overtook him so suddenly, as not to give him time to fulfil the rites of the church*, and some observations which were made by physicians upon the body, gave such weight to the suspicion, that Bernabas Malaspina, his cup-bearer, was arrested for a short time, and liberated upon the arrival of the Cardinal de Medicis, whose prudence allowed him not to irritate powerful persons, upon whom the suspicion of having suborned Malaspina might fall. From these persons we shall exclude the King Francis, whose generous mind and loyalty, so well known to Europe, removes every shadow of suspicion from him †.

* The satirical distich, upon the sudden death of Leo, is not written by Protestants, as Alembert asserts, but by Sannazzaro, who has chosen to allude to the abuse of indulgences :

Saera sub extrema si forte requiritis hora,
Cur Leo non potuit sumere ? vendiderat.

† Although many historians of Leo, and latterly, the very active Englishman, Roscoe, are inclined to attribute the death of the pope to poison, we do not feel ourselves disposed to assent to them, and

The character of Leo, like that of all men, was composed of various ingredients, good and bad. It was his good fortune, that the seeds of arts and letters, which had happened to take root under his predecessors, were brought to perfection and maturity under his reign, from the hereditary taste, generosity, and magnificence, he ever displayed. Rome and his court had no reason to envy the days of Augustus, of which age, that of Leo was called the rival. Under him, whilst the mitre and the purple did honour to letters, the chisel and the pencil of the greatest artists gave life to productions, not inferior to those of Phidias and Apelles. As long as the weakness of colours can resist time, the walls of the Vatican, both in the wise men of Athens, where judg-

these are our reasons: the pope lies ill for a whole week; catarrh is thought to be his complaint, and he dies unexpectedly: from which we can only infer, that the physicians did not understand his disease, of which they are very ready to cover their ignorance, by mixing poison with it. At the death which occurred in France, at the time of Louis XIV., of the Duke, Duchess of Burgundy, and their son, it was sufficient that an ignorant physician cried out: these are diseases, of which we *understand nothing*, in order to accuse the Duke of Orleans of poison.

The supposed evasion of Malaspina might have been an accident, since neither money nor memorandums were found upon him, to induce suspicion: the other conjectures of livid heart, of the slenderness of the liver, &c., are so light, as not to occupy the attention even of an apprentice boy to medicine for a moment. Even by the narration of Paride Grassi, read without prejudice, the same may be inferred: it finishes with these words: "Et quia suspicio fuit de veneno propinato in vino, fuit captus quidem Camerarius Pincerna Papæ, simul cum Canavario, à furore populi et suspicione, quia iste visus urbe exire, et ductus est in castellam, et postea sicut innocens liberatus est, et conclusum papum non ex veneno, sed catharro, mortuum."

To all which may be added that, since Cosmo, father of the country, the descendants, Peter, Lorenzo, and the sons, Julian and John, had not been long-lived.

ment has so well regulated the imagination, and in a mystery, where the painter has left us the images of so many celebrated men of that court, and many other walls of the same palace, will exhibit to us probably the highest summit to which this latter art can arrive. Leo is accused of having been too much addicted to scurrility, and of having almost alike distinguished and rewarded learned men and buffoons. And, in truth, the long time he passed in the company of the latter, the indecent jokes he made with them, the pleasure he took in the society of the foolish and the strangely deformed, the confidence bestowed upon the poet Querro, the ridiculous coronation of Barabello, and many other examples, confirm this character. He is also charged with duplicity and dissimulation, an accusation true indeed, but which is hardly regarded in politics, equal arms being now, at least, tacitly allowed in this contest, whilst the beaten party always complains. But he is accused of a greater crime: not taking sufficient care to prevent sacrilegious abuse being made by the dispensers of indulgences. Be it as it may, it was his misfortune, that the disorders, in dispensing these sacred treasures, were carried in his government to such a pitch, as to cause an explosion, which shook the papal throne, and this volcano, once set on fire, has continued to throw out fresh eruptions. The celebrity of this pope is superior to his real merit, and he owed it to circumstances. His fortune was various: son of the greatest man of his age, promoted, at thirteen years old, to one of the most honourable posts, obliged afterwards to go into exile with his family, he had the satisfaction of seeing them afterwards re-established in their native country, and himself at the summit of human greatness; but at the same time ill fortune struck him with the calamity of losing his dearest

relations, with the extinction, in the legitimate descendants of the line, of Cosmo, father of his country, and saw the hopes of the splendid establishment of his family vanish*.

* Jov. Vita Leo X. Guicciard. Hist. book 14. Nardi Hist. book 6. The latter adds, that Malaspina was afterwards beheaded for another crime.

CHAPTER III.

THE DUKE OF URBINO AND BAGLIONI REGAIN THEIR STATES.—ELECTION OF ADRIAN VI.—CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE LIFE OF THE CARDINAL DE MEDICIS.—ADRIAN'S CONTEMPT FOR ARTS AND LETTERS.—ALLIANCE OF THE ITALIANS WITH THE ENGLISH AND THE IMPERIALISTS AGAINST THE FRENCH.—CONSPIRACY OF BOURBON DISCOVERED IN FRANCE.—DESCENT OF THE FRENCH ARMY UPON ITALY.—DEATH OF POPE ADRIAN.—ELECTION OF THE CARDINAL DE MEDICIS, WHO ASSUMES THE NAME OF CLEMENT VII.—PESCARA ROUTS THE FRENCH.—DEATH OF THE CELEBRATED CHEVALIER BAJARDO.—SECRET TREATY OF THE POPE WITH THE KING OF FRANCE.—KING FRANCIS MADE PRISONER AT PAVIA.—INTRIGUES OF MORONE AGAINST CHARLES V.—DISCOVERY OF THE CONSPIRACY.—CHARACTER OF PESCARA.—HIS DEATH.—DESCENT OF FRESH IMPERIAL TROOPS UPON ITALY.—DEATH OF JOHN DE MEDICIS.—HIS QUALITIES.—DANGERS AND TUMULTS IN FLORENCE.—REBELLION QUELLED BY GUICCIARDINI.—BOURBON MARCHES TOWARDS ROME.—BOURBON ATTACKS THE CITY, AND IS KILLED.—SACKING OF ROME.

THE death of Leo immediately gave rise to great changes in Italy. The Duke of Ferrara, recovering from the calamities under which he had suffered*, took courage, and regained the greater part of the territory he had lost. Francis Maria, also Duke

* Alphonso could not refrain from expressing his joy at the death of Leo, by a demonstration which was not very decent: he caused a medal to be printed, whereon a man was seen liberating a lamb from the claws of a lion, with the motto, "Ex ore Leonis." Fearing, however, to draw great odium upon him by these medals, he suppressed them all.

of Urbino, joining Malatesta and Horace Baglioni, whose father had been put to death by Leo, re-entered the states of Urbino, assisted by the Duke of Ferrara, with few troops, and was joyfully received by his old subjects, who adored him. He afterwards occupied Pesaro, and approached to the attack of Perugia with Horace Baglioni. The Florentines, by the advice of the Cardinal de Medicis, who aimed at defending the pontifical states, acquiring name and authority, sent succours: the defenders, however, after a short resistance, surrendered. The little army of these allies passed into the Siennese territory.

This republic, since the change made therein by Leo, depended greatly upon the government of Florence, and had been always governed by Petrucci, whom Leo had advanced to the cardinal's hat; hence the Duke of Urbino endeavoured to change the government, in order that this republic too might make common cause with him, and with the other princes who were oppressed by the power of the pope and the house of Medicis. The Cardinal Julius, in going to the conclave, passed through Sienna, and had very much restricted the government of the magistracy, by reducing it to fifteen persons, in order that it might acquire greater energy. The latter made every stir to defend themselves, by enlisting all who were capable of bearing arms in their little state. They sent commissioners to Chiusi, to protect it, while the Duke of Urbino in vain approached the walls of Sienna. A reinforcement of Swiss was advancing, commanded by the celebrated John de Medicis, called afterwards of the black bands, (*bande nere*,) and a large quantity of snow falling, was a sufficient excuse for the duke to retreat, and abandon that enterprise*.

* Malevol. Hist. San. lib. 7. of the 3rd part.

The Cardinal de Medicis learnt, upon his arrival at Rome, that the government he had left in Florence, dreading some movement might be made in that time, thought proper to secure fifteen of the principal citizens, who were retained as hostages. The cardinal, hearing of this, with his accustomed moderation and mildness, ordered them to be set at liberty, an act which was universally approved; and two of them went on purpose to Rome, to thank him in the name of all*.

In the confusion that arose upon the death of the pontiff, the army of the colleagues had been disbanded. The French, who kept the castle of Cremona, endeavoured to occupy Parma. An illustrious Florentine citizen, the historian Guicciardini, was pontifical commissary at that place, and, although a gownsman, proved what a man of genius is capable of performing, even in war, although not experienced therein. The first generals, as Marc Anthony Colonna, Frederick of Bozzole, and Buonavalle, brought 5,000 men, partly French, partly Venetians; there were only seven hundred Italian infantry in the city, who were very disheartened, and the citizens were still more so. Guicciardini, by his prudence and constancy, supported the vacillating minds of the people, who wished to capitulate; and he succeeded in persuading them to issue the pay to the troops, the want of which made them tumultuous. He knew that the enemy had no artillery to destroy the walls, and that he might conquer by courage and firmness. He succeeded dexterously, in midst of the clamour and tumult raised by the people, (who, on seeing the assault near, threatened to open the gate,) to procrastinate until the attack was given. The citizens were

* Ammir. book 29.

forced almost to begin the defence, when, perceiving that it went on well, they gained courage, hastened to the walls, and the enemy was repulsed*.

After an obstinate and considerable dispute in the conclave, the Bishop of Tortosa, Adrian VI., was chosen pope, who acquired a celebrity he deserved not, from having been the preceptor of Charles V. The dissensions which prevailed amongst the Italian cardinals led them to have recourse to this foreigner, who, far from intrigues, was chosen without any controversy attendant upon them. He preserved the name of Adrian, and was called the Sixth.

The conclave being over, and some time having elapsed before the new pope could pass from Spain to Rome, the Cardinal de Medicis, under whose auspices the republic still continued to be governed, had returned to Florence. The Cardinal Soderini, a perpetual enemy of the house of Medicis, and rival of Julius in the last conclave, made an attempt to change the government of Florence, and take it from the hands of Cardinal Julius. The latter, however, who had some hint of it, fearing that the Duke of Urbino and Baglione would unite in the confederacy against Florence, with the forces which had shortly before threatened Sienna, had the adroitness to gain those leaders, by inducing them to accept the pay of the Florentine republic. In the mean time, however, the entire regulation of the war had been intrusted to Count Guido Rangone†.

Renzo da Cери, a celebrated leader of that age, in the service of the French, having received an order

* Guicciard. Ist. lib. 4.

† Ammir. Hist. lib. 29. Malavolti, History of Sienna, book 7, of the 3rd part.

from the king, to obey the Cardinal Soderini, from whom he was to obtain the necessary supplies of money; marched against the Siennese territory, with 500 horse and 7,000 infantry, in order to pass upon the Florentine: but Renzo never undertook an enterprise with less success, than this. He was driven with disgrace from every place where he presented himself; he, in vain, approached the walls of Sienna; no movement took place; and he retired with precipitation at the news of Rangone's approach with the Florentine troops. His expedition terminated in making depredations along the sea-coast, and he arrived at Acquapendente. The college of the cardinals, fearing that war might extend through the ecclesiastical states, interfered, and made a cessation of arms*.

This ephemeral movement was connected with a conspiracy, which was near arriving to maturity in Florence, and to which, probably, the easy toleration given to the public discourses, the actual form of government, or rather the dissimulation of the cardinal, had given rise. Knowing the love of the citizens for liberty, which had been extinguished by external force, in order to live more secure, he began to feed them with a hope of restoring it to them, by imitating the fortunate dissimulation of Augustus. But, what the latter did not with the Romans, the cardinal gave so much weight to such an opinion, that, amongst men informed in matters of government, it was spoken of as a near event, and dissertations were made upon the form of government best adapted to the city.

There existed, as we have elsewhere observed, a com-

* Malevolti, Hist. Sien. Ammir. Hist. loc. cit. Guicciard. Hist. book 14.

pany of young men, lovers of letters, who assembled to dispute upon political matters in the gardens of Rucellai; for which meetings the celebrated Macchiavel purposely wrote his profound discourses upon Livy, and his treatise upon the art of war. The disputes were carried on in these gardens, amongst this company, more than elsewhere; they wrote upon the new form of the Florentine government; and not only Zanobi Buondelmonti committed his thoughts to paper, but Macchiavel himself had composed his plan for a reform of government in Florence, at the request of the Pontiff Leo, who was reciting the same farce,—or, being probably more sincere than the cardinal, he really wished to establish a free government in Florence*. This opinion so far prevailed, that Alexander Pazzi composed an oration in name of the Florentine people, to thank the cardinal for so signal a benefit. Nor must we reproach the citizens for too much credulity; nothing appeared more probable. The cardinal was the last branch of the line of Cosmo. When promoted to the cardinal's hat, he loved ecclesiastical dignities more than secular ones, although, when a young man, he thought otherwise. What a glory would it not have been for him, if, in imitating Lycurgus or Solon, he had succeeded in forming a model of government in his country, which would have either equalled or surpassed the ancients! But the cardinal was playing a game,

* The discourse of Macchiavel was written in the two years which elapsed between the death of Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, and that of the pope, as we infer from the same discourse. It is not impossible, that the pope, seeing the legitimate line of Cosmo extinct, was ambitious of the glory of re-establishing a good government in his country; and, therefore, interrogated the most able man upon it, when death prevented him from carrying it into execution.

which it was not difficult for the Florentine youth to see into* ; and, probably, upon finding themselves deluded, and irritated, these young men first conceived the idea of framing a conspiracy against the life of the cardinal, and of effecting by force what he chose not to do of good will †. Those young men were Diaceto, professor of belles lettres ; Zanobi Buondelmonti, one of those to whom Macchiavel addressed his discourses ; Louis Alamanni, an illustrious poet ; and another Louis Alamanni, their friend, who cultivated both arms and letters.

The thread of this conspiracy was connected with the designs entertained by the Cardinal Soderini, and with the march of Renzo da Ceri. A courier, or French horseman, was arrested ; and, upon being secretly examined, confessed having carried letters to a Florentine citizen, whose name only he knew to be James. He gave, however, such a personal description of the man, that it appeared he meant James Diacceto, from whom he said he had received letters also to carry into France to the Florentine outlaws and to Soderini. Upon these appearances James Diacceto was arrested ; and scarcely was he examined, when, without being put to torture, he unveiled the order of the conspiracy, and that he had conspired with those

* Pazzi brought his oration to the cardinal, that he might read it ; but he excused himself on account of business, and told him to give it to Friar Nicholas della Magna to read, and give him his opinion upon it. Alexander executed the commission ; and, having often asked what he thought of his oration, received this answer some days afterwards :—“ Your oration, indeed, pleases me ; but not the subject of it.”—Nardi History, book 7. This answer was sufficient to dissipate the charm.

† This appears the most natural motive that excited him to the conspiracy ; the causes adduced by Ammirato are too futile and insignificant.—Amin. book 29.

young men, to murder the cardinal, for no other motive than to set his country free. Zanobi Buondelmonti*, upon hearing of the arrest of Diacceto, endeavoured to conceal himself at home ; but, being encouraged by his wife, he took to flight—and, arriving at Lucca by unfrequented roads, he passed on to Castelnuovo in Garfagnana, and met with a friendly reception from Lodovico Ariosto, his ancient guest, who was governor of the place. Louis Alimanni, who was in Figline at S. Cerbone, in the villa of Serristori, being advised of this seizure by one Brucioli, who was to have had a share in the conspiracy, took refuge also in the states of Urbino ; the other Louis Alimanni, however, was taken, and a process made against him, together with Diacceto.

The Cardinal de Medicis behaved in this affair with wisdom and justice. Not content with committing the process to the usual criminal tribunal, he procured the addition of sixty citizens to the eight of the magistracy and the eight of the guard ; and this junto was to judge them. Diacceto and Alamanni were condemned and beheaded†. The other two were banished as rebels, with a fine of five hundred florins, as were various others, and particularly the nephews of the Cardinal Soderini, brother of the gonfaloniere, who died about this time ‡. Nor did Nicholas Macchiavel escape without having the

* Nerli says, he was in his company when he heard the tidings of it, and that he was much agitated.

† A curious anecdote is related by Nardi, which shews the abuse which was made of the most sacred things. It was announced to the French courier, that he was condemned to death. He demanded a confessor ; and a spy was sent to him, dressed as a priest, who told him, that, if he did not confess all, he could not be saved. The poor fellow, who had withstood the torments, could not resist this fraud, and confessed he had a letter sown in his coat.

‡ Nardi History, book 7. Nerli Comment. book 7.

actions of these young men imputed to him, on account of the sentiments he had expressed, the works he had published, and the friendship he bore them*. The discovery of this conspiracy was fortunate, not only for the cardinal, but the city; since, if his death and a change of government had taken place, the imperial army, which was greedy of plunder, and was never paid by its masters, would have had a pretext for revenging his death, and sacking this rich city. The troops of Cæsar were already without pay; and it became necessary for the allies, and particularly the Florentines, to issue the same to them from dread of their committing excesses.

In the mean time, the new pope was conducted from Spain to Rome by an illustrious Florentine, Paul Vettori, who, after supporting the party of the Medicis in his native country, was created by Leo X. general of the galleys of the holy see, and had very much distinguished himself in naval warfare in the midst of the vicissitudes attendant upon good and ill success†. The pope was accompanied by eighteen galleys and other vessels: he stopped at Genoa, where the imperial commanders, Colonna, Pescara, and the Duke of Milan, went to prostrate themselves before him. Thence he proceeded to Leghorn, where, besides the four ambassadors of the republic, six cardinals, and amongst others the Cardinal de Medicis, came to compliment him. The pope followed his journey to Civita Vecchia and Ostia, and thence to Rome. This city was now in great dismay on account of a pestilential fever which raged in it; and had filled Italy with such terror, that precautions were

* Nardi, at the place quoted.

† Series of portraits and eulogies of illustrious Tuscans.

taken against it in Tuscany and elsewhere, as if it had been the real plague *.

The new pope, brought up in the university of ^{1523.} Louvain, had only learnt either the barbarous philosophy or theological subtleties taught in those times, and entertained the greatest contempt for poets, for elegant literature, and the fine arts ; and being thus transported on a sudden to a theatre entirely new to him, he excited the greatest disgust in the minds of the public. The idle slanderers, with whom Rome has always abounded, began to revile the name of Sextus, by repeating the verses of Sannazzaro, which the latter deservedly applied to Alexander †. It was remarked that the sovereign, as it were, of the capital of Italy was ignorant of her language, and spoke only a barbarous Latin. The elegant Grecian statues, which had been collected with so much care by his predecessors, were, in his opinion, only profane idols ‡ ; the paintings of Raphael in the Vatican useless ornaments ; and all that literature possesses of the elegant, a vain pastime for the idle. It is hardly possible to conceive, therefore, what a change of scene was produced by his arrival in Rome,—a city which, under the preceding pontiffs, had become the seat of the fine arts.

* Ammir. History, book 29.

† Sextus Tarquinius, Sextus Nero, Sextus et ipse ;
Semper sub Sextis, perdita Roma fuit.

‡ Jov. Life of Adrian.—Vianesio, ambassador of Bologna, shewing him the group of the Laocoön in the Belvedere, he turned his face from it, saying, “ sunt *idola antiquorum*,”—the elegant Letters of Sadoletto he called “ *Literæ unius Poetæ*.” Negri adds, “ So that I do not doubt that he will one day do, what has already been said to have been done by San Gregorio, make steps for the building of Saint Peter’s from all these beautiful statues, the true documents of Roman greatness and glory.

Above all, however, the parsimony and economy he exercised, excited an ill-will towards him in a people who were accustomed to the splendour, generosity, and magnificence displayed by Leo*. His rude and vulgar manners, as well as those of the few courtiers he had brought with him from Germany, roused the anger, and excited the ridicule of the Romans†. Although accustomed to the court of Charles V., he was ignorant of the management of affairs. The science of theology, and an immaculate purity of morals, formed his only merits; excellent qualities in a cloistered friar, rather than in a prince. A general discontent, therefore, soon became visible throughout Rome. Shortly after the arrival of the pope, the Cardinal de Medicis thought proper to go to Rome. He was beheld with joy, particularly by the courtiers, that is, by three-fourths of the city, in whose memory the magnificence and elegance displayed by the house of Medicis were awakened, and comparisons were drawn between that court, and the manners of Adrian. Nor could the glory attendant upon the successes of the pontifical arms in Lombardy be denied him, as well under Leo, as after his death, as every thing had been executed by his advice. His authority was increased by knowing that the Florentine government depended upon him: his appearance, therefore, eclipsed the cardinal Soderini his enemy, who had begun to gain the favour of the pontiff. When it was afterwards known, that this cardinal had held secret correspondence with the King of France, to

* A single triumphal arch, which was constructing for his ingress at Porta Portuense, he ordered to be interrupted, saying these were the pomps of heathenism. See the letters quoted by Negri.

† Jov. Vita Adriani. See the letters quoted, and in the verses of Berni, the chapter which begins:

O poveri infelici cortigiani, &c.

invade Sicily, he incurred the indignation of the pontiff, who caused him to be arrested, and made use of the Cardinal de Medicis for his principal counsellor*. By his advice an alliance was made between the pontiff, Cæsar, Ferdinand of Austria his brother, the King of England, the Duke of Milan, the Florentine republic, and the Genoese; and after much hesitation, even the Venetians, who had been for a long time united with France, joined the alliance upon the repeated entreaties made to them by Cæsar.

This alliance was intended to resist the enterprises that Francis, King of France, was preparing to carry into effect against Lombardy. The preparations were formidable, and the king was about to place himself at the head of the army, when the treachery of one of his principal relations, viz., the *constable or grand prior* Bourbon was discovered, who, having made an agreement with the emperor, was preparing to raise a rebellion against him in France, as soon as he should have left it†. The intriguing Louisa of Savoy, mother of King Francis, from female rage at her love being held in contempt by Bourbon, began to persecute him so far as to reduce him to this desperate party, which brought so many misfortunes upon France. Francis, therefore, delayed, but did not stop the march of the greater part of his army, which, counting more than 30,000 combatants, marched towards Lombardy under the command of Bonivet, a man who was born for the ruin of his country.

While this storm was preparing to break upon Italy, Pope Adrian died. The death of a pope in Rome is usually bewailed by few, and is regarded more as a fes-

* Jov. Life Adrian. Guicciard. Hist. lib. 15.

† Guicciard. book 15.

tival than a funeral. In the case of Adrian it appeared a real festival, and he was probably less lamented than a Sextus IV., and an Alexander VI.; so true it is, that expensive vices, accompanied by magnificence, are more acceptable to the people than economical virtue*.

The war began in Lombardy with the arrival of Bonivet. Superior in force to the allies, he was surpassed by them in the art of war, and the old Prospero Colonna, although infirm, knew so well how to temporize, that although the French had approached Milan, and had placed it in considerable danger, they were obliged to retreat without any decisive action having taken place. After two months of conclave, the Cardinal Julius de Medicis was elected pope, who assumed the title of Clement VII. to the great satisfaction of Rome, which entertained the highest expectations from his talents. One of his first actions was to restore the Soderini to their country, with their estates and honours; a very laudable work, if indeed it was not one of those conditions which were granted in conclave†. The festivals made in Florence for his election, were accompanied by a tragic scene, dictated by cruelty, and encouraged by the vilest adulation. Piero Orlandini having refused to pay immediately a bet upon the election of the Cardinal de Medicis, under the pretext of wishing first to be sure of the pope being legitimately elected, was ordered to be beheaded by the magistracy of the eight, as if he had

* In the night following the death of the pope, the gate of his physician, John Ambracino, was found crowned with festive leaves, with the inscription

Patriæ Liberatori
S. P. Q. R.

† Varchi Hist. of Florence, book 2.

committed a capital crime*, when he had been culpable only of a trifling cavil, in order either not to pay at all, or retard the payment.

The pope felt great concern at this: he publicly extolled, and afterwards rewarded, Anthony Bonsi with the bishopric of Terracina, and with his confidence, who, having taken no part in this iniquitous sentence, had given his candid vote. The new sublime dignity to which Clement was raised, made him neither abandon his desire of ruling the Florentine republic, nor the hope he always entertained of establishing therein the bastards of his line. Preserving, however, his usual dissimulation, he endeavoured to make it believed to be the desire of the city, that those young men should be placed at the head of the government.

From the moment, therefore, in which the Florentine ambassadors came to compliment him upon his new sublime dignity, he gained some of them secretly; and when he began to speak of the affairs of Florence, and to point out to them with what difficulty and dangers that government maintained itself, one of them, the Archbishop Minerbetti, using phrases dictated by the most abject humiliation, and at the same time, the meanest adulation, with tears in his eyes, after beseeching him to have compassion upon his native country, which remained an orphan after the departure of his holiness, suggested to him that, without one head, and probably two, of the house of Medicis, it could with difficulty be maintained. James Salviati spoke in a contrary sense, and both he and Minerbetti had fol-

* Varchi Hist. book 1, Nardi. book 7, Ammir. book 29, Nerli, book 7.

lowers; but whether this was a comedy in which every one recited his part, or Salviati may be thought in earnest, it was sufficient for the pope, who feigned that the argument did not displease him, and remained undecided*.

At a proper time, however, he sent the Cardinal Passerini to Florence to take his place, who took up his habitation in the Medicean palace, and assumed the protection of the two young Medicis, Hippolitus and Alexander. The origin of these youths, although they were acknowledged by the pope as appertaining to his family, is not free from those doubts which may arise upon the real father, particularly upon women who prostitute themselves. It was reported that Hippolitus was the son of Julius the Magnificent, born in Urbino of a noble lady†, who wishing to conceal the fault, had condemned him either to death, or to oblivion in that sojourn, where so many victims of incontinence, ignorant of their origin, are buried: but that the charitable servant brought him to Julius, who chose to take upon himself to educate him; although, as he was not the only fortunate lover, he could not be fully satisfied of being his father. Leo X., amusing himself with the innocent jokes of this boy, not only caused him to be educated nobly, but ordered Raphael, with his divine pencil, to paint him in the rooms of the Vatican. Alexander was believed to be the son of Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, and of a black slave, and his features, large lips, very brown colour, and curled hair, induced a belief that this was his origin; although both Pope Clement, when Prior of Capua, and

* Varchi, Hist. of Florence, book 2.

† She called herself Donna Pacifica of John Anthony Brandano. The Abbe Serrassi has found the authentic document of all this in the book exposed by the fraternity of Santa Maria del Piano d' Urbino, 19th April, 1511.

a carrier having participated in the favours of this slave, the father of this young man was also very uncertain*. If he was really the son of Clement VII., the affectionate partiality evinced for him by the father, in wishing to exalt him is the more excusable, who began by 1524. obtaining for him a state in the kingdom of Naples, with the title of Duke of Civita di Penna.

These two spurious branches were destined by the pontiff to succeed to the splendour of the house of Medicis, and to rule over Florence. They came, therefore, to this city, and together with them his legitimate niece, Catharine. Alexander resided, for the most part, in the country, under the care of a Florentine gentleman†, while the other, although not more than fifteen years of age, was, by favour, declared eligible to hold employments.

The war was growing continually more fierce in Lombardy. Upon the death of Prospero Colonna, the emperor had substituted for him the Duke of Lanois, Viceroy of Naples, a man better versed in the intrigues of courts than in the art of war. His two companions, however, Pescara and Bourbon, were well fitted to make amends for his incapacity: the latter, upon his designs being discovered, evading the anger of King Francis by flight, had been sent by the emperor into Italy with the title of his lieutenant general. He was an enterprising man, and the hatred he bore towards Francis, brought his natural talents into greater activity. The army,

* This is the opinion of Segni (Florentine History, book 3.) But Scipio Ammirato relates (book 30,) that the Grand Duke Cosmo I., whilst he was reading to him his stories, gave him to understand that Duke Alexander was born of a maid-servant of the house of Medicis, and of Clement VII, when he was Jerusalemitan Chevalier.

† Ammir. calls him Rosso Ridolfi, Varchi John of Bardo Corsi.

however, of the greatest of sovereigns, Charles V., Lord of the Spains, of America, Flanders, Holland, of Austria, of Naples, &c., was without money, and the pope, the Florentines, and the city of Milan were obliged to furnish considerable contributions, to pay the soldiers, and make them take the field. The two armies met each other almost in equal number: Bonivet offered battle to the imperialists, which the latter, certain of wasting the enemy slowly by prudent military operations, avoided: various partial affairs took place, in which Pescara, John de Medicis, and the Duke of Urbino particularly distinguished themselves. The French army was consumed by little and little. Bonivet waited in vain for the reinforcements of the Grisons, (who were driven back by John de Medicis,) and the Swiss, who arrived too late; and saw the necessity of abandoning Italy. He began his retreat towards Novara, and having thrown a bridge over the Sesia, the army began to pass the river. The cautious Viceroy of Naples chose not that the enemy should be followed up; but nothing was able to control the ardour of Pescara, who, following close at his heels, and coming up with him at the passage of the river with no more than 1,000 horse, and as many infantry, immediately attacked him. The French thought they were assailed by the whole imperial army, and threw themselves into confusion, and fresh troops arriving to the succour of the assailants, the French were defeated with a very heavy loss of men and artillery. Bonivet himself was wounded, and the celebrated Bajardo, who was surnamed the *knight without fear**, was slain. (*Cavaliere senza paura.*)

This fortunate event for the imperial arms encouraged

* Guicc. book 15. Jov. Vita Pesch.

Bourbon to lead his troops into France, and he boasted of being favoured by his adherents. The viceroy remained at Milan; and Bourbon with about 17,000 men entered Provence. The most prudent counsellors had remonstrated with the emperor upon the danger attending this expedition, the deficiency of his treasury, the energy displayed by the French for the defence of their country: but the youth of Charles, who was ambitious of undertaking splendid enterprises, the instigation of Bourbon, who, according to the custom of the outlaws, was blinded by fury, and saw as probable what was very difficult, induced him to adhere to it. France was to be attacked at the same time on the side of Spain, and by Henry of England in Picardy. The imperial generals against the opinion of Bourbon, wished to lay siege to Marseilles, which city was well fortified with a numerous garrison commanded by Renzo da Ceri, and Frederick of Bozzole, and the army consumed itself uselessly in the siege.

In the mean time the King of England did not march; very faint attacks were made on the side of Spain; and Francis was therefore enabled to send succours to Marseilles. But Bourbon, already seeing the failure of the enterprise, was retiring, and he marched from Marseilles at the same time that the king broke up from Avignon towards Italy. The latter who had the Milanese always at heart, and who had already collected numerous troops, determined upon preventing, by hasty marches, the return of Bourbon, and advance into Italy. The two armies were marching by different roads: the imperialists keeping the side of the sea, the king arrived at the same time at Vercelli, and Pescara at Alba. The forces of the allies were inferior in number to those of the king, and were disheartened, as usually happens

after the failure of an enterprise. The viceroy leaving 700 men in the castle, abandoned Milan, which was incapable of offering resistance, from being exposed to an extreme misery on account of the plague, or cruel epidemic, which desolated that unfortunate city, and after placing a garrison of about 7,000 men in Pavia, commanded by one of the most able Spanish generals, Anthony di Leva, he withdrew the imperial forces to Cremona*.

It would have been difficult at this moment to have foreseen the stormy events which took place; but in every supposition Pope Clement would have done well to have made no innovations in the political relations which were already established by his predecessor, probably by his own counsel. He chose not, however, to confirm the league with Cæsar; whilst at the same time he asserted he had made no engagement with his enemies, protesting he would do the duty of common father, and counselling both parties to make peace, which was conformable with his timid, ambiguous, dissimulating, character†. And had he frankly and truly continued to act according to his declaration, by preserving a perfect neutrality, we should find nothing to blame him for. Either, however, dreading the greatly increasing power of Cæsar, if he united the possession of Lombardy to the kingdom of Naples, or that the King of France appeared to him at that moment preponderant, he chose to ally himself rather with the latter; and it is certain that he treated with him by means of Albert Pio, a man of doubtful faith, and Monsignor Mathew Ghiberti. This treaty was never well known to the public. The

* Guicciard. Hist. book 15. Jov. Vita Pesch.

† Guicciard. book 15. Jov. Vita Pesch. book 5.

pope and his agents asserted that it was declared therein, that he would neither act against the King of France, nor against the emperor, and the king took the states of the church and Florence under his protection, binding himself to maintain the form of government predominant in that city. But it was said that neutrality stood in no need of a particular treaty, and the public imagined there were secret articles. They thought they perceived a favourable disposition in the pope towards the French, as it was commonly believed that Alphonso, Duke of Ferrara sent the French five boats of powder, by the pontiff's insinuation, and was taken under their protection: the brave John de Medicis abandoning the service of Cæsar for that of Francis was another strong suspicion of a secret treaty.

These operations, although made with timid hesitation, escaped not the eyes of attentive politicians, and drew upon him the anger of the imperialists. The siege of Pavia continued, which was bravely defended by Leva, and converted into a blockade. King Francis, impatient of this delay, seeing his troops superior to those of his enemies, chose to attempt another enterprise, viz., the conquest of the kingdom of Naples, and sent the Duke of Albania thither with 10,000 infantry. These troops, who marched into Tuscany, would have been a sufficient excuse for the timidity and irresolution of the pope, if he and his counsellors had known how to treat dexterously with the imperialists. And, indeed, as this new irruption was troublesome to him, he endeavoured, by many artifices, to make the Duke of Albania tarry in the Siennese, advising him to give a better form to that republic, which had expelled Fabio Petrucci, who had been established therein by the pope's influence, when cardinal. Nothing could have been more impolitic

than this movement, to the interests of the French, who thereby deprived themselves of so large a body of troops at a time when their enemy was receiving powerful reinforcements. In fact, the Marquis of Pescara, who, although he was not the first in the command in the imperial army, was so in fact, both in ability and counsel, thought no notice ought to be taken of this expedition; that the kingdom of Naples would be contended for in Lombardy, and would remain the possession of the conqueror. His counsel prevailed, in spite of the viceroy, who trembled for that kingdom.

Pavia was reduced to a bad, plight, and hardly ^{1525.} in a condition to bear the horrors of famine. The imperial army, without money, and inferior in force to the French, were murmuring from want of pay, and threatened to abandon their ensigns: and nothing less was wanting but the activity and eloquence of the Marquis of Pescara to keep them to their duty. He was adored by the soldiers.

In the mean time, considerable reinforcements of troops, and supplies of money, arrived from Bourbon, who had pawned his jewels. The imperialists resolved upon coming to battle. King Francis might have avoided it; and all writers, who are infallible judges according to the event, say he should have done so; since the pecuniary aids brought to the army were only a little water offered to so raging a thirst, and by falling again into the same necessities, the imperial army, would have been obliged to disband itself. To avoid battle, however, it would have been necessary to abandon the siege of Pavia, and this step would have carried with it marks of dishonour; this measure, however, was advised by the wisest as the most secure. Bonivet, who possessed every ascendancy over the mind of the king, was

of the contrary opinion. To his natural courage, probably, he united the wish of flattering the king, with whose generous mind he was well acquainted; and avoided every proposal which bore the stamp of fear. His opinion prevailed; they came to battle, and the French received one of the most memorable defeats which exist in the annals of France. The principal glory on the other side was owing to Pescara, who made the finest dispositions, and was wounded in two places. The greater part of the French nobility were either killed or taken prisoners; the army destroyed; and King Francis himself, after fighting bravely like a common soldier, having slain many soldiers with his own hand, and received several wounds, was obliged to surrender himself prisoner*. Bonivet expiated in death the crimes he had committed by the pernicious counsels he had given, and carried with him the odium of the nation.

Italy was panic-struck at this decisive blow, and saw herself thus placed at the discretion of an insolent army, pinched by hunger, and greedy of booty: but the pope and the Florentines were so particularly, and the latter were not ignorant that the ambiguous proceedings of the former had excited the suspicions and even the anger of the imperialists. In these critical circumstances, if the pope had been of a more vigorous, and less undecided character, he would have adhered to the proposal made by the Venetians, who invited him to form an

* He was recognised by a French soldier, La Motte, who told him to surrender himself to Bourbon, but great as his danger was, he disdained surrendering to a rebel. He caused the viceroy to be sought for, to whom he gave his sword, which he took kneeling and put by the side of his own. Giovio deserves to be read for all the particulars of this battle. He had learnt them from the mouth of the king himself, and many officers of both sides.

alliance with the other powers of Italy; call in a considerable body of Swiss, and join the French troops with them under the command of the Duke of Albania, who were still in Italy, and thus make a rampart to the power of Cæsar, which threatened the whole of Italy with slavery, whose troops, although numerous and victorious, were without pay, and their generals being embarrassed to keep them quiet, it might have been expected they would be less obedient to the power of Cæsar, than their own caprice.

Clement was about to conclude this treaty; but always timid and dubious, hardly had the Archbishop of Capua arrived, who had spontaneously treated with the viceroy after the affair of Pavia, hardly had he offered him an agreement, when, abandoning all engagements, he made an alliance with the emperor for himself and for the Florentines. The principal object of the imperial generals was to find money for their famished troops, and by this precipitate treaty they obtained it. Protection was secured to the city of Florence and the house of Medicis upon the Florentines paying 100,000 ducats, a sum very opportune for the wants of the army, but un-serviceable to those who paid it, because the treaty was never ratified by Cæsar; and upon the money being demanded again by the pope and the Florentines, they were rather ridiculed, than answered with any reason that had even the mask of justice.

The dismay of Italy at the increasing power of Cæsar was rather augmenting, when it was seen that instead of giving the frequently-promised investiture of the duchy of Milan to Francis Sforza, the Spaniards exercised over it the most cruel and despotic empire. Lombardy was indeed reduced to the greatest difficulties: desolated by pestilence; in the power of a licentious military;

obliged to obey the caprices and unbridled excesses of an army which considered victory made every thing lawful, and to which army the commanders themselves were obliged to permit the commission of assassinations, rapes, and plunder, as an indemnity for the pay it did not receive. All the other powers of Italy were in dread of slavery, since it appeared it cost Cæsar alone the wish to reduce them to it; and he had given no proofs of his moderation. Void of generosity, and taking advantage of the unhappy situation of King Francis, when he went to Madrid he had not even visited him. Nay, in treating of his liberation, he made such exorbitant demands, that King Francis himself decided rather upon dying in prison than re-purchasing his liberty at such a price.

The pope, therefore, the Florentines, the Venetians, with the other small powers of Italy, were in the greatest dread *, when Morone first counsellor of Duke Sforza, a man impassioned in the service of his master and his country, enterprising, active, eloquent, and capable of the most daring projects, conceived the idea of liberating Italy from the tyranny of foreigners. The disgusts felt at Pescara by the court of Madrid were not unknown, where rewards and honours were bestowed with a prodigal hand upon the viceroy, who brought the king prisoner to that city, while Pescara, the principal author of the victory, was neglected; and it was known that the latter had written a severe letter to Charles V. himself, wherein he accused the viceroy even of cowardice in the time of action †. Morone contrived to form a secret alliance between the Venetians, the pope, the Floren-

* Guicci. History, book 15. Varchi History, book 2.

† His reason, in fact, was so much disturbed, that he forgot even to give orders to a body of troops to go into battle, which remained, therefore, inactive.

tines, and Duke Sforza, in which it was decided upon to offer Pescara at once the glory of being the liberator of Italy, and the crown of the kingdom of Naples. He was idolized by the troops; and the greater part would have followed his standards.

Pescara appears to have consented at first to the proposals made him by Morone. Almost all the powers of Italy were of accord with him; dispositions were already made for this great event, when Pescara probably perceived, that the conspiracy had come to the knowledge of Cæsar, and he was attentively observed by Anthony of Leva. Then it was that, in order to save himself with his sovereign, he embraced the dishonourable part of becoming the informer against his companions, feigning that he had listened to the propositions made to him, and followed the treaty only to make known all its threads to Cæsar. He was, in consequence, obliged, by order of the emperor, to undertake all the mean offices, which were fitting to the personage he represented. He concealed Anthony of Leva behind a door, in order that he might listen to the discourse Morone held with him, upon the termination of which, Leva discovering himself, intimated to him his arrest, and Pescara took upon himself the aspect and forms of judge with his accomplice. This discovery made a great noise in Italy. The parties interested in the conspiracy everywhere raised clamours against Pescara. He was marked with the infamy of traitor, with which he disgracefully terminated a hitherto glorious career at the age of only thirty-six years. Agitation of mind, occasioned probably by this disgusting event, accelerated his end.

He was, without dispute, the bravest general of his age. Since the battle of Ravenna, at which he was present when a very young man, and in which he was

covered with wounds, and remained upon the field half dead, down to the present time, he had had a share in almost all the warlike actions of importance, either as a principal personage, or one of the agents of the greatest renown. He married Vittoria Colonna, one of the most celebrated women of her time for her mental endowments and personal qualifications*. She has written lyric poems in a very chaste style: and although, after the fashion of that time, we meet with some servile imitations of Petrarch in them, others are free from all annoying monotony: the sonnet addressed to Bembo himself is one of the prettiest that that sort of poetry can boast of; nor is there any, even of Bembo's, which approaches it. A part of her poetry consists in chanting the praises of the hero who was her consort; the other of spiritual themes: since, upon the death of her husband, she retired into a convent.

This conspiracy, being so solemnly discovered, filled all parties with extreme diffidence†. The emperor, seeing the animosity which the dread of his power awakened in Italy, pretended to calm it, by proposing to give the investiture of the duchy of Milan to Bourbon, as Francis Sforza was considered as having lost

^{1526.} his rights thereto from being a conspirator.

The Italian princes, not thinking that the mind of Cæsar would be easily appeased after so open an outrage, thought of uniting together in their common defence. An alliance was entered into against him between the pope, the Venetians, and the Florentines, the Duke Sforza joining with the King of France, who, by promising to

* Many historians relate that he was strongly dissuaded by her from the design of revolting against Cæsar, preferring loyalty to the title of queen.

† Guicciard. History of Italy. Jov. Vita Pisch. lib. 7.

the emperor what every sensible politician clearly saw he would not maintain, had been liberated. The pontiff, abusing the usual right, which the morality of all ages and all religions abhors, absolved King Francis from the oath which had bound him to Cæsar. The emperor, ignorant of these tricks, had sent to the pope D. Ugo di Moncada to make an alliance with him. The pope, being engaged in the other, refused : but it was not easy to foresee, that this union, which, made at a time when a considerable body of French organized troops were in Italy with the Duke of Albania, would probably have possessed sufficient vigour to arrest the progress of the imperialists, was now only a frail hinderance ; because, besides the little stability to be found in alliances when the members of them are numerous, it might be feared that the collective troops of the pope, the Venetians, and Florentines, would ill confront the veteran conquerors of the French arms ; and that they would derive little assistance from France in the critical circumstances in which she found herself. No part was better adapted for the pope to play than that of his natural office ; that is, of a neutral, of common father and peace-maker-general. The Florentines were obliged to follow his wish, and to share his fortune. They entered into the new alliance with bad disposition, since their commercial interests suffered from it.

The Duke of Milan found himself besieged in the castle by the imperialists, and reduced to a bad condition. The troops of the league, which were more considerable on account of their number than their valour, were commanded by various officers of merit, and amongst them by John de Medicis. The Duke of Urbino was commander-in-chief. Many attempts were made to succour the Castle of Milan ; but, although the impe-

rial troops were very inferior in number, they behaved so well, that the allies ventured not to risk any thing of importance: Sforza was, therefore, finally obliged to capitulate*.

Nor did the affairs of the pope go on better in Tuscany. One of the designs he entertained was to change the government of Sienna, that he might assure himself that that state, which was placed between the dominion of the church and that of the Florentines, would not oppose his views. An army of about 10,000 men, joined by many Siennese outlaws, marched towards Sienna with a train of artillery. The army was not inured to arms; the commander, the commissary Ricassoli, incapable of commanding it. This became known to the Siennese, and they ventured out, in a number not exceeding four hundred, to attempt a blow against the artillery, and found so little resistance, that, getting possession of it, they turned it against the enemy. Fresh succours arrived; and, taking greater courage, they succeeded in dispersing this army, and remained masters of nineteen pieces of artillery, to the great disgrace of the Florentines†.

Italy was now in great agitation: everywhere perfidy and arms were alike had recourse to. Pope Clement was the first to experience the melancholy effects thereof, which were only to be the prelude to a more fatal event. The war, which had been undertaken against Cæsar, had involved him in troubles on the side of the kingdom of Naples. The Colonna, joining Ugo di Moncada, took away from him Anagni, so that the war had begun also on this side. The pope, in the mean time, according to his timid and uncertain character, spoke words of peace

* Guicciard. History, book 16. † Ammir. History, book 30.

through the mouth of Moncada. This was artfully accepted by the Colonna, who evinced themselves ready to restore Anagni, in order to lull to sleep the vigilance of the pope, who, under the faith of an accommodation, imprudently dismissed his troops. The perfidious Moncada then joining the three Colonna, and amongst them the Cardinal Pompeo, appeared suddenly at the gates of Rome, with 800 horse and 3,000 infantry. The pope, at the repeated entreaties made by the cardinals, took refuge in Castel San Angiolo. The Roman people, divided into factions, and little attached to the government*, remained curious spectators, offering no opposition as they might have done, and probably applauded this band of assassins, who sacked the Vatican, and respected not even the church of St. Peter, nor the houses of the cardinals, prelates, or ambassadors, which they could get at †. The parsimony exercised by the pope, the avarice or bad faith of his ministers, had caused that castle to be left unprovided with arms and provisions; hence he was obliged to sign the capitulation, which pleased those assassins; that is, a truce of four months between him and Cæsar, wherein he bound himself to recall his troops from Lombardy, and Andrew Doria with his galleys; and was obliged also to grant a pardon to the Colonna for the infamous attempt they had made against him. This order was very prejudicial to

* Jos. Vita Pomp. Colum.—We here see, and in the Histories of Varchi (book 2) how greatly, and for what reasons, the pope was odious to the Romans.

† These bloody divisions gave occasion to the poet Croto to write the following verses :

Ecce iterum summo dejectan culmine Romam
Pompei et Juli mens furiosa premit;
Brute piuum Photine piuum nunc stringite servum;
Quid servasse juvat si peritura fuit?

the affairs of the league, which began to wear a better aspect in Lombardy, the pope having been obliged to give the Cardinals Cibo and Ridolfi as hostages, and to order his troops* to repass the Po.

It is easy to imagine that a pontiff, who had the right to absolve others from promises and oaths, would make use of this right for himself: wherefore it was not long before, assembling his troops, he attacked the estates of the Colonna, ordered them to be sacked, their villas and palaces burnt, fulminated his censures against them, and deprived Pompeo of the dignity of cardinal†. The Colonna merited this revenge, made as it was, however, against the faith of a treaty, and impolitic as it was also, because it irritated the emperor, in whose name Moncada acted.

While the christian princes were so cruelly tearing each other to pieces, Solyman, Emperor of the Turks, taking advantage of the dissensions which prevailed among them, had invaded Hungary, and gave a memorable defeat to King Lewis, in which the young king was slain, with the greater part of his army: Buda was taken, and about 200,000 persons reduced to slavery. This fatal event was a tacit reproach to the European princes, who consumed their strength in tearing asunder miserable Italy; but more especially so, to that prince, who, from the duty of his calling, should have considered himself bound to unite them; and who, instead of doing this, spent the treasures of the church in maintaining troops, which served to foment those dissensions. The affairs of wretched Italy were daily growing worse and worse. It was not easy to appease the ani-

* Letter. d' Principi, vol 1. Letter of John Negro. Jov. Vita Pomp. Columnæ.—Guicciard. book 17.

† Jov. Vita Pomp. Col.

mosities which had broken out between the two principal sovereigns, who were so sored one towards the other: Francis, on account of having been made prisoner at Madrid; Charles, who considered himself deluded by the non-observance of promises. Italy was the bone of contention of the combatants, in which an army was found, not composed of one nation, in which the officers, at least, may have some shadow of regard for national honour; but of adventurers collected on every side, men the most unprincipled and desperate, who, without paying the least respect either to religion or decency, sought only to give vent to their passions, the avidity of gold, and the most shameful appetites. The ingredients, in particular, which composed the imperial army, were of this kind. Hitherto, from want of succours, they had only exercised their destructive power upon Lombardy, which was become a skeleton.

The city of Milan particularly appeared the object of the greatest desolation. She was struck repeatedly by pestilence, the people were deprived of arms, and governed by blows, while the whole riches, the gold and silver of the country, were in the hands of the barbarous conquerors. The greater part of the citizens had fled: grass grew in the once frequented streets, and houses and shops were seen empty and open, without any master. There remained nothing more to devour in Lombardy; and these hungry troops, who availed themselves of the want of pay as a pretext for the commission of every foul crime, awaited only reinforcements, to extend their depredations throughout the remainder of Italy. Bourbon was a commander worthy of them; a rebel to his king, an enemy to his country, in the bosom of which he had been a guide to foreigners, intrepid at every danger, and capable of any crime.

A body of about 14,000 Germans, led on by George of Fransperg, attracted by the lust of sacking Italy more than of assisting the emperor, had already penetrated into it on the side of Trento. The Lutheran reformation was now raging, and many of these troops, and their leader himself, were protestants*. If the Duke of Urbino and the brave John de Medicis arrested not this torrent they at least retarded it. The latter, being unfortunately wounded in the knee, from a piece of artillery, was brought to Mantua, and died there at twenty-eight years of age; an age, immature indeed for him, but sufficiently long for his glory. It was necessary to take off his leg, and, during the operation, so certain was he of being master of himself, and so much he despised the pain, that he chose not to be bound. His death was very unfortunate, since, had it not occurred, the sacking of Rome would probably not have taken place. He was of opinion, that, without engaging in a general action, the army of Bourbon might be destroyed by little and little, by harassing him every day in his march.

John was descended from the line of Lorenzo, brother of Cosmo, father of his country. He was the son of another John, and the celebrated Catherine Sforza, widow of Count Jerome Riario. When a boy, he found himself involved in the calamities which attended his mother, who, being driven from her states by Duke Valentine, and shut up in Castel San Angelo, in Rome, was set at liberty by the generosity of Ivo d' Allegre. He lost his father at three years of age. The mother was obliged to conceal him for safety, in female clothes, in the convent of Annalena. Salviati undertook his

* It was said he had attached to his saddle a rope of gold, to hang the pope.

education: even when a child, he evinced a warlike disposition, by provoking his contemporaries to puerile battles. Being disposed to quarrel, he was banished to a distance of twenty miles from Florence, by the gonfaloniere Soderini; and when he afterwards went to Rome, he preserved the same quarrelsome character. Arms were his only studies and his cares: he thought of nothing but fighting, and was a conqueror in all the enterprises which were intrusted to him. His courage was beyond all belief; and the two armies, Spanish and French, upon the banks of the Adda, while the passage of the troops was retarded by the slowness of the boats, beheld him with astonishment, passing, with an only horse, in face of the enemy, infusing wonderful courage into his friends. He was so great a swimmer, that he twice traversed the Po with his breast-plate upon him, and made the soldiers also exercise themselves in doing the same. Various wise answers are related of him: being asked if he wished to make his will, he replied, that poverty and the laws had sufficiently provided for it. Seeing one of the most cowardly of his soldiers die, he said: Praised be God, that we run more danger in being cowardly, than in being courageous. And yet, this brave and fierce man was terrified at spirits and hobgoblins, and would not venture to sleep alone in a room. His death, which was a misfortune for Italy and the pontiff, displeased the latter not much, who, wishing to establish his illegitimate line in the government of Florence, looked with a jealous pusillanimity upon a young man, who had the power, whenever he had the wish, to contend with him for the supremacy. But the caprices of fortune deluded the designs entertained by Clement: as Cosmo I., son of this hero, and of Maria Salviati, daughter of his preceptor, became sove-

reign of Tuscany. Tuscany, more fruitful in literati than in warriors, reckons him as the first of the latter. The brave troops of John bewailed the loss of their general; and, as a sign of mourning, put on black uniform: the valour he had imparted to them long distinguished them*.

In the mean time, the new body of Germans was advancing into Lombardy. The Viceroy of Naples, leaving Spain with a large fleet, upon which 4,000 Spanish infantry were embarked, met, near Codimonte, with the fleet of the pope, commanded by the brave Andrew Doria, who had hitherto blockaded Genoa. After an obstinate engagement, the viceroy lost a large vessel: the remainder were very ill-used, and dispersed, and finally joined again in the kingdom of Naples. The troops having disembarked, hostilities began also against the pope on this side, who was vacillating between various parties: wavering between fear and the desire of revenge, he wished and unwished, and appeared scarcely to know how to govern. He endeavoured to attach the Duke Alphonso of Ferrara to his interests, by promising to give Catherine, daughter of the Duke Lorenzo de Medicis, in marriage to his eldest son, with the investiture of Modena, for which Alphonso was to pay 200,000 dollars. But it was too late: he had already joined Cæsar, and he, probably, mindful too of ancient persecutions, encouraged Bourbon afterwards against the pope; whilst the corps of Fransperg, marching towards Tuscany, had joined Bourbon, and, intent more upon making booty, than the interests of their master, had decided upon sacking two cities, Florence and Rome,

* He is therefore called John of the *black bands*. See Giovio, his eulogy. Varchi, book 2. Nerli Comm. book 7. Ammir.

as hostile to their sovereign, or rather, because they were the most opulent. At their movement, the pope determined upon seeking an adjustment with the viceroy, and obtained a truce of eight months, with various conditions; and amongst the rest, was that of paying 60,000 ducats, and restoring their estates to the Colonnese.

Having done this, he dismissed, with a puerile ^{1527.} confidence and credulity, 2,000 Swiss and the brave black bands, against the universal sentiment, the first example of a few months before not having been sufficient, when deceived by the Colonnese, to give him a lesson upon the danger which a disarmed prince runs in time of war*.

In the mean time, that army of desperadoes, 25,000 strong, breaking up from Lombardy, marched without money, magazines, or artillery, and being thus obliged to sack the towns and villages, left traces of desolation wherever they passed, and approaching Plaisance with the intention of sacking it, that city was saved by the prudence and activity displayed by Francis Guicciardini†. This army was followed up, and kept in observation by that of the alliance, in which the same Francis Guicciardini, President of Romagna, held the commission of lieutenant. The government of Florence sent Nicholas Macchiavel to inform them, with exactitude, of the daily events which occurred. The captains of the army of the alliance were three in number: the Duke of Urbino for the Venetians; Frederick of Bozzole, for the King of France; Saluzzo, for the pope and Florentines. The ancient hostilities of the house of Medicis rendered

* Guicciard. book 18.

† Varchi Hist. book 2. Guicciardini, however, actor and author, makes no mention of him.

the mind of the former little disposed towards the Florentines and the pontiff; and the instability of the latter, who every moment made and unmade agreements with the viceroy, had given diffidence to his allies: the army was consequently deprived of all unity of action. In vain the pope advised Bourbon to retire from the ecclesiastical territory, in vigour of the truce; in vain the viceroy intimated the same to him repeatedly. No officer had it any longer in his power to command so disorderly an army. The Marquis del Vasto, and other Neapolitan nobility, retired, ashamed of making war with such a rabble (*canaglia*); nay, Bourbon gave the viceroy to understand, not to approach the army, which was enraged against him, since he would risk his life. Fransperg had been struck dead with a stroke of apoplexy, whence Bourbon alone commanded, or rather obeyed those plunderers*.

The city of Florence was in the greatest fear, which was increased by the order given for preparations to be made to put the city in a state of defence; since, although Florence, after the new tactics, also used artillery, she had not yet learnt all the refinements introduced by the art. Shortly before, through the foresight of Gerard Corsini, bastions had been begun, under the direction of Anthony da S. Gallo, outside the gate of S. Miniato, which extended as far as the hill of Giramonte: another was built at the gate of S. George, and the innumerable and strong towers, which stood upon the walls of Florence, had been demolished, with the public disapprobation, although with the advice of two celebrated military architects, Frederick of Bozzole and the Count Peter Navarro. The impositions too were greatly increased: no person

* Guicciard. Hist. book 18.

was permitted to absent himself more than sixteen miles from the city, and provisions were allowed for fifteen days to be brought into the city without paying duty, with the exception of wine and oil, the duty upon which was reduced one half*.

While the uncertainty and vacillation of the pope placed even the Florentines in danger, who were obliged to make common cause with him, and were threatened with being abandoned by the league, they declared they would remain united with it, in spite of any agreement they had made with the pope; and, in order to reconcile themselves with the Duke of Urbino, they restored to him the fortresses of S. Leo and Majolo, which they held a long time in hand. Important dispositions, therefore, were made by the army of the league, for the defence of Bologna, and particularly of Florence, where a considerable body of troops had arrived. Great discontent existed in Florence against the government, as is usual amidst calamities and dangers, the blame of which was attributed to the house of Medicis, and the pope particularly, who, by engaging in this disastrous war, had forcibly dragged the Florentines into it; and afterwards, wavering and deprived of counsel, he appeared to have forgotten their interests, thinking, as it were, that if he perished, his native country would obsequiously accompany him in ruin. The government was weak, even had not the present difficult circumstances occurred. The Cardinal Passerini possessed neither the talents necessary for government, nor of dexterously turning the minds of the Florentines as he pleased: his two new companions, the Cardinal Cibo and Ridolfi, who were sent by Clement, improved not affairs; the former being

* Varchi, book 2. Ammir. book 30.

equal in capacity with Passerini, the latter a relation of the malecontents. The weakness and the fear of the government were visible at every step: the people spoke with impunity of a change, nor had the government the courage to punish a nocturnal tumult, in which some young men in arms had not only resisted the public force, but had even put a public executioner to death. The Cardinal Passerini, moreover, having assembled some of the first citizens in his own house, to consult upon the urgent affairs of the republic, Nicholas Capponi had the courage to tell him, that affairs of such weight were not to be treated of in a private house, but at the public palace, and in the council of the citizens; and this being made known, increased still more the courage of those who panted for a change in the state. Arms had been demanded by the Florentine youth, to defend themselves from the impending dangers with which they were threatened by the foreign troops, which were promised by the government, but being retarded, increased the bad humour.

During this agitation of minds it happened that the cardinals, on the 26th day of April, although they were not ignorant of the agitation which prevailed, very imprudently left the city, to meet the heads of the army, who were at Olmo di Castello, a villa of the Medicis, about two miles out of the gate to Faenza. Either that suspicion arose, or that it was artfully spread, it began to be generally whispered, that the heads of the government were flying from dread of the army of Bourbon. Raising therefore a clamour, a numerous body of young men, who were set in motion by persons ill-affected towards the Medicis, rushing to the palace, shouted out *The people, and Liberty*, immediately occupied the gate, and drove away the guard, commanded by Bernardino da

Montanto. Calling the signiors together by force, with the gonfaloniere Louis Guicciardini, they obliged them to take various parties, and above all to declare the Medicis rebels. The dubious party was declared the conqueror; and Robert Martini, the chancellor, having hidden himself in the tumult, on purpose not to be obliged to sign any party, Ser Julian da Ripa was found ready, and called to the chair, who subscribed to it with a kind of complacency, remembering that he himself, in 1494, had done a similar act. Anthony Alamanni, kneeling on one knee before the gonfaloniere, urged the passing of the other decree, to liberate the banished and the rebels. Doing so with very loud shouts, he received a push from the gonfaloniere for his importunity; at which act his son James struck the gonfaloniere a blow upon the head, although only a slight one, and which doing him no injury, was probably given more to intimidate than offend him. This was a ferocious young man, possessed of little sense; and had shortly before lightly wounded Frederick de' Ricci, one of the signiors, in the head, because it appeared to him that, by his delay, he shewed himself unwilling to assemble with the others; and gave John Franceschi a stab in the leg with a knife, to hasten him whilst he was going up; and, although he now avoided the chastisement due to him, it was only reserved for him at a proper time.

In the mean time this party was gained; and they determined moreover, upon returning to the old form of government as it was under the gonfaloniere Soderini; and probably foreseeing the necessity of defending themselves, the large bell was immediately rung to assemble the people: then, as if all had been done without taking the most vigorous precautions, amidst so much danger with a large army near them, they began, as in a

tranquil calm, to pass their time in embracing each other, making merry at the liberty they had regained, and called to mind the prophecies made to them by Savonarola.

Swift messengers had been expedited by the party of the Medicis to the cardinals with advice of the events which had taken place. These returning rapidly, and bringing Noferi with them, the latter accompanied by a chosen band of soldiers, (since the rebels had not had sense enough to cause the gates to be shut up and kept,) arrived at the square, easily drove away the people, and occupied it. His soldiers then began endeavouring to open the gates of the palace by force, by putting many lances together, and thrusting them forward at the same time, they would soon have succeeded in breaking down the gates, as the defenders were without the materials of defence, if the historian Nardi, who was acquainted with the palace, had not shewn them large masses of stones, which, put together and covered over with a thin stratum of lime, represented little walls, and had been brought there for such emergencies. Easily moving them, therefore, they began to shower them upon the assailants, in a manner that they were soon obliged to retreat from the gate, which proved the salvation of the rebels.

Night was now approaching, and great disasters were foreseen: the people, who were half rebellious, might have been led to the commission of many excesses in the dark, and the city might have been sacked by the troops of the alliance, when Frederic of Bozzole offered himself as mediator. Being suffered to enter the palace with some difficulty, it appeared not that at first he succeeded in persuading the obstinate and discordant rebels; and being probably insulted and irritated, he returned to his own people, expressing a wish of sending for the artillery,

and destroying the palace. But the historian Guicciardini, lieutenant in the army of the alliance, which had also entered Florence, seeing Frederic return, and foreseeing that he would be enraged, went to meet him before he could speak with the others, and pointed out to him how greatly either a sacking of Florence, or a massacre of the citizens would displease the pope, and how pernicious such an event would be to the affairs of the alliance: he, therefore, persuaded him to speak to his companions in a better tone, so that both were entreated to return to the palace, and sign a reasonable agreement, which being done, Guicciardini easily shewed the citizens to what danger they were exposed without provisions and arms, and how *mal-d-propos* they sought for changes, and excited tumults at a time when they were threatened with final extermination by the army of Bourbon. The rebels, acknowledging the wisdom of the exhortations, their inability to maintain themselves, and the danger to which they were exposed, consented, and an entire oblivion of what had happened was agreed to on both sides*.

The Lieutenant Guicciardini at first received great applause for having appeased the tumult, but was afterwards calumniated by both parties, who remained discontented; by the Cardinal Silvio, because, had not the accommodation taken place, he said, the government of the Medicis would have been established that day by the arms of the alliance, and that the safety of many citizens, and his brother, who were shut up in the palace, lay more at his heart, than the interest of the Medicis. The contrary party too complained that he had deprived them of the victory: a very common injustice between

* Nerli Comm. book 7, Varchi Hist. book 2, Nardi Hist. book 8, Ammir. Hist. book 30.

factions, and no unusual reward to those who employ themselves for the advantage of others.

The agreement was fully observed, since the pope, to whom the Cardinal Passerini had written the names of the rebels, besides the history of the success, waited only the issue of the arms of the league against the enterprise of Bourbon, in order to take more vigorous measures. The latter, in the mean time, having passed the Apennines between Forli and Faenza, had entered Tuscany by Galeata: but the army of the alliance penetrating into Casentino, and taking up a position at Incisa to cover Florence, Bourbon perceived his attempts upon that city would be fruitless. The viceroy, equally without capacity in arms as in council, endeavoured to save the pope and Rome, and was deluded by Bourbon. The latter being not far from Alvernia, the viceroy came to meet him, readily offering him 80,000 florins in gold, and 70,000 more to be paid within the month of October, a sum which the pope drew from the Florentines by letters of credit: but the greedy soldiers, who were already devouring Rome and her riches in imagination, became tumultuous to such a degree that the viceroy was obliged to save himself by flight, in which, being incognito, he found himself in danger of his life. Being wounded in the head, he was taken by the country people not far from Camaldoli, and was rescued by a monk of Vallombrosa, upon whom he afterwards conferred the reward of a bishoprick in the kingdom of Naples*.

Bourbon, seeing his stay in Tuscany of no avail, left the district of Arezzo without artillery and baggage, and hastening to the Siennese, rapidly took the road towards Rome, preceded by a corps, which prepared him

* Varchi, book 2. Ammir. book 30.

quarters by robbery. The movements of the army of the alliance were not equally rapid with those made by Bourbon, nor did the former probably wish to follow him, since, besides the bad disposition the Duke of Urbino entertained towards the pope, the duplicity and continual changes of proposal from the latter had disgusted all the generals; and he was consequently not followed up.

The times of public calamity, in which impostors or fanatics are attended to with partiality, are those when men are ready to receive all impressions. A vulgar man, half fanatic, and half impostor, commonly called Brandano, appeared in Rome about this time. He was born at Petraja twenty miles distant from Sienna. For some years he was a labouring man in the country, but afterwards putting on sackcloth, torn garments, and going barefooted, he held in one hand a crucifix, in the other the skull of a dead man; often struck himself on the breast with a stone, so as to produce blood, and preached to the Siennese populace for a considerable time, mounted upon a wall or other elevated place, announcing to them like a new Jonas the scourges and chastisements of heaven. He was called by many the madman of Christ (*il Pazzo di Cristo*). He was so ignorant that he knew not how to write, and a part of the gospel was explained to him by a priest every day to support thereon his declamations, which were given in the lowest style, and in the most vulgar manner. Nevertheless a vast number of the populace continually crowded around him, and many even of the nobility refused not to listen to him, as a person inspired by heaven: so true is it, that the sordid torn garment, and insolent impudence, strike the public eye with astonishment; and men of this description, from Diogenes down to Brandano, have been listened to

with prejudice, particularly if they declaim against the government and the powerful. After various and long pilgrimages, he had made even as far as St. James in Galicia, where he was frequently received as a prophet, put in prison, and received many stripes; he appeared at this calamitous period in Rome, and collecting the people around him, began to inveigh against the government, and particularly against Pope Clement, calling him a bastard, and therefore no true pontiff. He was often punished with imprisonment, and with the rod; and it is said that he was once thrown into the Tyber, from which his credulous adherents boasted, that he was miraculously saved. This madman or fanatic ceased not giving trouble to the government, and being kept in prison when the calamity of the sacking of the city took place, he was afterwards set at liberty as a prophet.

The pope, who had hitherto hoped for defence in the truce, seeing it useless, returned to join the confederates and give orders for the defence of Rome. Renzo da Ceri put many people in arms, but they were an undisciplined mob, servants, and small shop-keepers joined with a few regular troops. Bourbon, not meeting with any resistance in his march, arrived at Rome on the 5th of May, and pitched his camp at the meadows. He had no time to lose, being without money, without provisions, and the confederate army able to overtake him on the flank. The following day at morn the army marched, under the favour of a mist, to the assault of Borgo di San Pietro, which was defended by Renzo da Ceri, Camillo Orsino, and Horace Baglione. A brave defence was made: but the soldiers of Bourbon, fighting with the greatest obstinacy, (since if the blow failed, they would have been driven to despair,) having fixed the ladders where the wall was lowest, began to scale it. Bourbon was amongst

the first of the combatants, and was distinguished by his gilded arms and white uniform. Being, therefore, easily pointed out, as he ascended the wall* he was struck dead to the ground before he arrived at the summit. The soldiers nevertheless entered. The pope took refuge in the castle with many cardinals and prelates †, and in passing through the Corridor that led thereto, he often observed in tears, from the apertures, the horrid slaughter made of his people.

And here begins a scene of horror of which Rome, not even in the times of the Goths, had seen the like; since the sacking of that city by the abandoned soldiery of Charles V. surpasses all that the barbarians have ever committed therein, or the Turks in other places ‡. More than 7,000 helpless persons, who had taken refuge in the churches, in the very Vatican Basilica, at the altars, which they embraced in vain, and amongst the relicks of the saints, were put to death. Not only the palaces, but the churches, were robbed of all the money, gold, and silver, they contained: the sacred vases, the shrines, were torn away; relicks and consecrated wafers thrown to the ground. No sanctuary, no convent, remained untouched; the holy virgins were torn from the cloister; the most respectable ladies with their daughters were obliged to satisfy the brutal lust of these monsters. The cardinals and most illustrious personages were arrested and obliged to pay a very heavy

* Benvenuto Cellini asserts in his life, that the blow which killed Bourbon was aimed by him and two of his companions, Alexander and Francis.

† Amongst these was the historian Paul Giovio, who relates that he covered the pope with his clothes and hat to prevent his being recognised, and aimed at in the open air upon the bridge of wood.

‡ Many writers, as Giovio, an ocular witness, are of this opinion.

ransom, and many put to torments, to make them discover treasures supposed to be concealed. Even the German and Spanish prelates, friends of the cardinals, were not secure, but were robbed, arrested, and obliged to ransom themselves with large sums; the sacred garments even of the prelates and cardinals, after having become the booty of the soldiery, served, as it were, for theatrical spectacle. Wrapped up in these, the barbarous soldiers went leaping and dancing through Rome, imitating the venerable personages to whom they belonged. This barbarous sacking lasted many days, as no officer had any authority to restrain it, since, after the death of Bourbon, the little subordination which he exacted no longer existed *.

In the mean time, Philibert, Prince of Orange, was elected commander by them, who blocked up Castel San Angelo still more closely, and reduced the pope to great difficulties. The Count Rangone had arrived near Rome, leading a part of the army of the confederacy, with which he ventured not to undertake any blow. The Duke of Urbino followed slowly with the other forces. A council was held in Orvieto, and the greater part of the officers were of opinion they should march to Rome to meet the enemy who, immersed in the disorders of the sacking might be easily oppressed, or at least that they should endeavour to liberate the pontiff from Castel San Angelo. The Duke of Urbino, whose mind still harboured a remembrance of the old wound, in the persecutions he had suffered from the house of Medicis, and who was therefore not displeased to see the pope in such trouble, in which he himself had been involved, always made difficulties, and no attempt was made. The un-

* Guicciard. book 18. Jovius, Life of Pompeo Columnæ.

fortunate pope was finally obliged to surrender almost at discretion, and receive the laws and conditions which it pleased the assassins to grant him. These were very severe, obliging him within two months to pay 400,000 ducats, to consign to Cæsar Castel San Angelo, Civita Vecchia, Ostia, Civita Castellana, and cede to them Parma in perpetuity with Piacenza, for the fulfilment of which conditions the pope, with thirteen cardinals, were to remain prisoners until the first ratio of 50,000 ducats was paid, and afterwards go to Naples or Gaeta, and there wait the determination of Cæsar. A doleful experience, which is little honourable to mankind, has always shewn that all are alike enemies of the unfortunate, and instead of taking compassion upon them, endeavour to take advantage of their misfortunes. The Duke of Ferrara, a constant enemy of the pope, may be pardoned for having seized this opportunity of making himself master of Modena, and Sigismund Malatesta for having taken possession of Rimini, which was an inheritance of his ancestors; but it was cruel and scandalous for the Venetian allies of the pope to occupy Ravenna, Cervia, and *Le Saline* *.

* Guicciard. Hist.

CHAPTER IV.

CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IN FLORENCE.—THIRD EXPULSION OF THE MEDICIS.—NICHOLAS CAPPONI CHOSEN GONFALONIERE.—PESTILENCE IN ITALY.—FRESH DESCENT OF FRENCH TROOPS UPON ITALY.—THE POPE FLIES TO ORVIETO.—CIVIL DISSENSIONS IN FLORENCE.—JESUS CHRIST IS CHOSEN KING OF THE FLORENTINES.—MARCH OF THE FRENCH AGAINST NAPLES.—VICTORY GAINED BY THE GALLEYS OF DORIA OVER THE IMPERIALISTS.—DORIA ENTERS THE SERVICE OF CHARLES V.—THE FLORENTINE YOUTH TAKE UP ARMS.—SECRET CORRESPONDENCE OF CAPPONI WITH THE POPE DISCOVERED.—IS DISMISSED HIS OFFICE, AND FRANCIS CARDUCCI CHOSEN IN HIS STEAD.—CAPPONI, BEING SUMMONED BEFORE THE MAGISTRACY, IS PARDONED, AND ACCCOMPANIED WITH HONOURS TO HIS HOUSE.

AFTER the fruitless attempt that had been made, to revive the ancient system of liberty, the Florentine people remained dejected and silent. The stipulated pardon for, and oblivion of, all that had passed, a bad protection to the conquered, who were disarmed, left them in fear, or at least in humiliation. The soldiers of the Medicis went boldly through the city, looking with a jealous eye, either upon those who had taken part in the rebellion, or their friends and relations; guarded the house of the Medicis, and the public palace; prevented the ingress into the square, and the egress from the gates, and permitted none, who were at all suspected, to go out of them.

In the mean time, the capture and sacking of Rome took place. That misfortune was kept secret for some

time in Florence, and the event was related very differently from the truth, since the death of Bourbon furnished the pretext for it; but when the imprisonment of the pope was known, the same persons, who, a few days before, had made the useless attempt to change the government, thought they could now do so with greater foundation. The governors were intimidated; the three cardinals without talent, without character, without money to pay the troops, and the means of finding it; the two young men were inexperienced; and the citizens of greater weight were animated against them.

To increase the public ferment, Philip Strozzi and his wife arrived in Florence. This man, who was sometimes a friend, at others an enemy, of the Medicis, was only governed by ambition. Besides the rivalship he maintained with the house of Medicis, he was angry with the pope, who, having consigned him as hostage to the Spaniards in the first accommodation with the viceroy and the Colonnesi, had afterwards entirely forgotten him, and left him exposed to the discretion of the enemy. He had been liberated, however, by the latter, on purpose, probably, that he might deliver Florence from the power of the pontiff. His wife, Clarice, daughter of Piero de Medicis, sister of the Duke Lorenzo, and niece of Pope Leo, proud of so many titles, looked with disdain upon two bastards, who were raised to the government of Florence, and her own family in abasement. Hereto was added the promise, which was never maintained by Clement, to create her son Piero cardinal, whence she nourished no less hatred than her husband towards the pope. Arriving at Florence, she intimidated the rulers the more by her lofty words and threats: whilst her husband, using crafty means,

endeavoured to persuade them to leave the government, and replace those young men in the situation of private individuals*.

Whilst, however, these councils were privately going on, the principal citizens uniting, resolved upon re-establishing the ancient liberty, re-opening the grand council, and that the Medicis should return to the condition of private individuals. Such a provision being made known to the governors by Philip Strozzi, much was not wanting to persuade them to cede, what it appeared to them they could not preserve. It was agreed, on the 16th of May, that Hippolitus and Alexander should remain at home as private citizens, and should only have the privilege of not paying taxes for five years. The Cardinal of Cortona, however, thought that he could not, with security, re-assume a private life, in a city where he had governed, wherefore he determined upon going away with those young men: but, as the Florentine people was animated against them, and the city in agitation, dreading some insult or misfortune, they asked for two respectable citizens to accompany them; and John Francis Ridolfi and Louis Gherardi were chosen, with the addition of Philip Strozzi, that he might cause the countersigns of the fortresses of Pisa and Leghorn to be consigned by them. They departed, therefore, under the escort of Captain Noferi, and stopping some time at Poggio a Caiano, repaired, by Pistoia, to Lucca.

In the former city, one of the customary movements of the factions had taken place between the Cancellieri and Panciatichi, to which the news of the changes in

* Varchi Hist. book 3. Segni Hist. book 1. These two relate the act of Clarice very differently.

Florence had given rise, when Philip Strozzi went there by order of the signiory, and every care was taken to quell it*. The Medicis had no great wish to restore the fortresses of Pisa and Leghorn; the first being held by Captain Paccione, the second by Galeotto da Barga; and although they wrote down an ostensible order for restoring them, they secretly gave an order to the contrary. The Castellans excused themselves for some time, under the pretext that they had received the consignment from the pope; but, being attacked by one of the most powerful methods, gold, they yielded, although Paccione finally refused, from punctilio, the stipulated reward.

The city, in the mean time, was neither in slavery nor free: and the various sentiments which were expressed tumultuously, threatened anarchy. It appeared to the public, that many of the principal citizens, profiting of the opportunity, wished to contract the government into an aristocracy: the tacit ferment began to degenerate into tumult, and the remembrance of the political maxims of Father Savonarola, who had preached for the most ample and extended government, were still too recent; the lovers of aristocracy, therefore, seeing the impossibility of success, after many deliberations and useless attempts, agreed to satisfy the people, by re-opening the grand hall or council. The privilege of belonging to it was granted to all eligible citizens above the age of twenty-five years, and on the 21st day of May, after the celebration of the mass of the Holy Ghost, 2,500 citizens assembled in it, to the great joy of the city, which, remembering the predictions made by Father Jerome, began anew to venerate him as a

* Varchi Hist. book 3. Segni Hist. book 1.

prophet*. In the great council, the ten of liberty, the eight of guardianship, and in another assembly, the senate of eighty, were created, by which the most important deliberations were entered into. One of the first was, whether they should confirm the union with the army of the confederacy, ally themselves with Cæsar, or remain neutral. The first opinion was supported by Thomas Soderini; the second, which appeared the most prudent, by Nicholas Capponi; the former, however, prevailed, which was probably very prejudicial to the republic, since the emperor, who sought for an alliance with it, promised to maintain liberty. This government was without its usual heads, the gonfaloniere and the signiory. To create the former, the grand council elected sixty electors, each of whom named a citizen above the age of fifty years, and of these sixty thus sent, he was to be gonfaloniere who had most votes: this happened to be Nicholas Capponi. It was determined that he should remain in this office for thirteen months; and afterwards should be elected annually, without any prohibition against his being re-confirmed†.

Although the change had taken place peaceably, and without the effusion of blood, the most bitter enemies of the house of Medicis failed not to insult the friends and the favourers of it, by breaking their arms to pieces, and even the statues which stood in the streets or churches. They were angry too that the gonfaloniere, although one of the authors of the change, but a wise and moderate man, should sometimes consult with some of the persons belonging to the late government, because they were better informed than others of the current affairs. These

* Varchi Hist. book 3.

† Varchi Hist. place quoted. Segni Hist. book 1.

inquietudes, which were continually increasing, were partly settled by a remedy worse than the evil itself; viz., pestilence, which broke out in the city. In the latter years it had afflicted Milan, and penetrated as far as Naples and Rome; and although it seemed to have avoided Florence, it finally made its appearance there, and obliged many of the principal citizens to take refuge either in Prato or in the villas; and if writers of that age have not exaggerated, about 40,000 persons died between the months of May and November*. A dearth, too, added to the calamities which overwhelmed wretched Italy.

In Rome nature appeared disposed to vindicate herself for her offended rights upon the heads of the wicked imperialists, of whom the plague made as great a ravage as the sword, to an extent that, of this army, between the sword and disease, none escaped out of Italy. The plague had penetrated also into Castel San Angelo, where the pope was under the custody of Alarcon, who was used to this office; who, after having been the keeper of the King of France, had become so of the pope. At repeated entreaties he was transferred with the cardinals to Belvedere, but under the strict custody of the Spaniards†. A great number of the imperialists abandoned Rome from dread of the pestilence, and dispersed themselves through various towns and castles, many of which they sacked ‡.

The King of France, not so much to liberate the pope as to oppose the increasing power of the emperor, sent a fresh army into Italy, under the command of Lautrech.

* Cambi.

† Others assert he never left the castle. Guicciard. Hist. book 18. Jovius, Life Pomp. Colum. &c.

‡ Guicciard. Hist. book 18. Jov. Hist. book 25.

This army arrived in Lombardy, where Anthony Leva was in Milan, with not more than 5,000 imperialists; Lautrech, therefore, became master of the country, occupied various towns, and laid siege to Pavia, which the French soldiers entering ferociously, and remembering the disgrace they had suffered under her walls, gave vent to their rage by murdering more than 2,000 persons, and subjecting the city to all the horrors of a sacking. If Lautrech had marched to Milan, which was almost the only city which remained for him to conquer, he would probably have been successful in his enterprise; but stimulated to succour the pontiff, he advanced to Plaisance, where a new confederacy was entered into between the usual powers of Italy, and the French, against Cæsar, who at the first news of the imprisonment of the pontiff had put on mourning, and bewailed his misfortune; but facts did not correspond with words. He gave no orders for his liberation, on the contrary, exacted intolerable conditions, and there are persons who assert it was his intention to send him prisoner into Spain, out of vanity of having the two first sovereigns of the universe prisoners at Madrid.

The pope, in the mean time, not paying the sum agreed upon, the hostages, who were ecclesiastical or secular persons of the first distinction and dignity, were cruelly tormented by the ferocious soldiery, who twice led them to Campo di Fiore to be hanged. The approach of Lautrech hastened the conclusion of the treaty with the pope, who, having no money, was reduced to the necessity of selling the cardinals' hats*. Although the agreement was concluded between the imperialists and the pope, the latter dreading the hostile disposition of Ugo, who had already succeeded Lanois, fled in the

* Guicciard. Hist. book 18. Jov. Hist. book 25.

disguise of a merchant to Orvieto, where the generals of the confederacy went to meet him, and to propose to him various measures: but his misfortunes had not only broken him down, but increased his natural diffidence and irresolution. Fortune, however, which had lowered him to the bottom of her wheel, was now preparing to raise him rapidly to the summit. A prelude thereto was the recovery of Parma, which Lautrec, who had already arrived in Lombardy, had restored to the ecclesiastical government.

Italy now presented the most lamentable spectacle. She was afflicted by the three horrible scourges, pestilence, war and famine. A wretched band wandered about the country without food, and obliged to perish in the streets. The same happened in the cities, which were emptied of their rich inhabitants, and full of soldiers and poor persons, who evinced the misery they suffered in crowds in the streets and churches, by their pale and meagre aspect, and filled the air at night with lamentable cries. Florence, although struck by the pestilence, was one of the least unfortunate cities of Italy. This evil was however beginning to cease; and Italy, which had escaped from the claws of Bourbon and the imperialists, would have been sufficiently tranquil, had the parties, which it was so difficult to extinguish, permitted it.

We have already seen the moderation employed by the gonfaloniere Capponi in the change of government. He loved moderation, and exhorted the people to lay aside all civil hatred: but factions knew not that virtue which was regarded as a vice by the ruling party, who having been oppressed under the Medicis, wished now in their turn to be the oppressors. Amongst the faults, which were attributed to the late government, the most

rational was the useless squandering which had been made of the money. It was said that the republic was not only constrained to follow the uncertain, and at all times irresolute, measures of Pope Clement; but obliged to spend enormous sums uselessly to serve the political designs of Leo and Clement, and the private interests of their house, and had spent, at least, 500,000 ducats in the acquisition and defence of the Duchy of Urbino, to create an appendage to Lorenzo, and thus forge their own chains*. An equal sum had been spent in the war of Leo against France; 300,000 ducats had been paid to the captains of the imperialists before the election of Clement; and not less than 600,000 were spent in the present war†. To these just, but not useless complaints, were added the inveterate hatred the contrary faction bore to that house, the intemperance attendant upon newly-acquired liberty, whereby a crowd of young men, whose sense had not yet been matured by age, committed injuries and insults towards the old members of the government, and generally against the friends of the house of Medicis. The moderation displayed by Capponi was, therefore, interpreted for an attachment to them. To the moderate measures employed by the gonfaloniere, it was said that prudence advised him to have regards for the pontiff. The Florentines were in alliance with him, together with the King of France; from the troops of the latter they expected protection, and the pope was revered by the king and by the general. The gonfaloniere, therefore, wished not to come to an open rupture with the pope, and probably kept some secret thread of treaty with him. The fanatics for a free government, and the enemies of the Medicis, publicly calumniated him.

* Other historians say 800,000. † Guicciard. Hist. book 18.

Among these was a ferocious man, a bitter and perpetual enemy of the house of Medicis, a friend more of blood than of liberty. This was Baldasser Carducci, once Professor in the college of Pavia, where, speaking indecorously of the pope, he was punished with imprisonment by the Venetians, who were then in alliance with him. Upon the change effected in the government, he returned to his native country with great favour. An unsuccessful rival of Capponi in the office of gonfaloniere, this motive was added to others for reproaching him both in words and writings*. Capponi had the secret party of the Medicis in his favour, that of the moderate, and even the pious and religious; since he was considered as such, and a follower of the principles of Savonarola, to the religious insinuations of whom, in a time of pestilence, when smitten by a scourge, the feelings are more open. He had recited also almost an entire sermon in the public college, finishing by falling on his knees, and shouting, as the friar used to do, "*Mercy*," (*misericordia*,) in which act he was accompanied by all the assemblage in tears. The maxims inculcated by the friar had begun to be renewed. The monks of San Mark, who were not sufficiently corrected by the chastisements they had received during the life of Father Jerome, began anew to interfere in the government of the city, and Friar Bartholomew of Faenza, without possessing the talents of Friar Jerome, appeared disposed to march in his footsteps†.

In this ferment of parties, the gonfaloniere, perceiving

* A writing printed in Sienna came before the public, in which, laying down what ought to be the qualities of the true gonfaloniere, the satire of Capponi, and the panegyric of Carducci, were made by meaning, but not naming, them.

† Varchi History, book 4.

that they endeavoured to prevent the confirmation of his office for the new year, had recourse to an expedient which will appear very strange, whatever might be his intention, whether he acted with a sincere and religious motive, or made it serve his politics. After an appropriate oration, in which, setting forth the example of his elders, he endeavoured to shew that his house had been always lovers of liberty, after having shewn the danger of offending the powerful citizens and foreign princes, he began with devout ejaculations to exclaim, that in order to be placed under a true and safe protector, it would be necessary to elect Christ king of the Florentines, and that a party should be made for him. Although the council was surprised at such a proposition, the poll was made, and Christ was elected king of the Florentines; but not with full votes, there being about twenty persons contrary to him, who were not, however, enemies of Christ, but of the strange proposition that had been made. All the kingdoms and republics of the world are under the control and providence of the King of the universe, in whose will lies the fate of empires and of rulers. The election therefore, of that Being as sovereign of a country, as it can add nothing to his power, became useless, nay, ridiculous. It was, nevertheless, accepted with transport by the council, and Christ, being proclaimed King of the Florentines, the inscription of the decree was raised over the gate of the palace, a relique of which, or the name of Christ, still remains*.

* The inscription is quoted differently. Varchi, in his History, at book 5, says,

“ ΤΗΣ

Christo Regi suo Domino Dominantium, Deo summo Optimo Max.
Liberatori, Mariæque Virginis Reginæ dicavit. Anno S. MDXXVII.
S. P. Q. F.”

Segni,

Precautions were then taken such as they imagined Christ would have made, prohibitions of games, wine houses, indecent fashions, &c. The usual government was carried on, the gonfaloniere received great praise for the proposition, and obtained his intent, since a great part of the city turned in his favour: so true is it that compensations, where religion is concerned, although sometimes weak and ridiculous, produce wonderful effects upon weak minds, or upon the greater part of the world*. Nor was it long before he was confirmed in the office of gonfaloniere. This confirmation, however, heated still more the hatred of the party contrary to him, who began to oppose him even in propositions which were evidently useful to the republic. He wished, for example, that a minister should be kept near the pope for the double motive both of appearing in peace with him, and at the same time of spying more closely upon his actions, which was refused.

Lautrech, in the mean time, arriving at Bologna, demanded a passage and provisions through the states of the republic, and the troops which the Florentines, as allies, were obliged to contribute. Mark Nero, and Thomas Soderini being sent to him, had influence sufficient to persuade him not to pass through Tuscany, where pestilence and the want of provisions would lead him into no small difficulties. The promised troops

Segni, book 1.

“ Jesus Christus Rex Florentini Populi S. P. decreto electus:” and the same in the life of Nicholas Capponi, “ YHS. XPS. Rex populi Florentini S. P. Q. F. concensu declaratus.” It is astonishing that some did not object that such a provision would subject the Florentines to the jurisdiction of the pope, as ostensible vicar of the sovereign they had chosen.

* Varchi, History, book 5. Segni, book 1. Ammiratori History, book 30. Nardi, Hist. book 8.

^{1528.} were sent to him wherever he chose. These were the celebrated black bands of John of the Medicis, commanded by Horace Baglione, which taking another road, whilst Lautrech passed through Romagna, joined him at Lucera. In those times, when the system of warfare was so badly organized, these troops enjoyed the reputation of being well disciplined. The commissary Soderini took care to maintain good order among them, and the captain Puccini, therefore, being guilty of various crimes which are wont to be tolerated in other corps, was arrested and sent to Florence, where being tried with all forms, he was condemned to death and executed*.

Those bands distinguished themselves in various rencontres: their general, Baglione, was slain whilst fighting bravely, and his successor, Count Ugo de Popoli taken prisoner. Lautrech advanced at the beginning with incredible success, and a great part of the kingdom of Naples fell into his power.

The imperialists finally marched from Rome, under the command of the Prince of Orange, to the defence of the kingdom, with no more than 13,000 men; while the enemy's army was said to be at least three times superior; whence the imperialists, with the viceroy Moncada, were obliged to retire to Naples, under the walls of which city Lautrech finally appeared, and laid siege to it. There was a great dearth of provisions, when a fleet laden with them drew near. In order to get in, however, it was necessary to fight the squadron of Andrew Doria, commanded by Philippino, who blockaded that port. The two fleets were reinforced by the two land armies: the viceroy, not content with sending

* Varchi, History, book 6.

many of his best troops, went on board also : they came to blows, and the fleet of Doria prevailed. The viceroy, Moncada, with many of the superior officers, were killed, two ships alone were saved, Naples was considered lost, but was, nevertheless, saved by the indiscretion of the French generals against Doria.

This virtuous man, a lover of his country, was irritated at the harsh, and not very politic, manners with which the French treated both him and Genoa. Not content with ruling over it, having opened the port of Savona, they endeavoured to make it an important centre of commerce, which would have drawn along with it the ruin of Genoa. To public insults were added individual ones : whilst the fortune of maritime events depended upon Andrew Doria, the French officers who were with him had the imprudence to treat him with the highmindedness usual with favourites. This republican, with that rude simplicity which belongs to naval men who are not used to courts, returned pride with pride ; when the former, with those arts which a man of this description is usually ignorant of, ruined his credit, and made his loyalty suspected by King Francis, who gave orders to arrest him. The Marquis del Vasto, prisoner of Doria, had attentively observed the progress of his discontent, and endeavoured to attach him to his master. The orders for the arrest of Doria, most difficult to be executed even in his ignorance, were made known to him ; he then accepted the offers of Vasto,—and, sending back his commissions disdainfully with the uniform of the order of St. Michael to King Francis, he went into the service of Cæsar with his ships, which were now directed, not to blockade Naples, but to bring her those succours of which she stood in need*.

* The causes of disagreement between King Francis and Doria

To this misfortune for the French was added the want of money promised by the King to Lautrec, which had been kept back by the avidity and infamy of his mother; and, consequently, the penury of the army, and even the plague which desolated Italy, and of which Lautrec himself died, fought greatly in favour of Naples. The Marquis of Saluzzo, a man of middling talents, who succeeded him, was obliged to retreat, and being persecuted by the Prince of Orange, forced to lay down his arms ignominiously, and remain prisoner, in order that the remainder of the army might retire to the confines of France.

A book has been written upon great events originating from little causes. This is an example thereof: The disgusts given to Doria by the ministers of King Francis ruined his enterprise against Naples, and made him lose all influence over Italy. Had it not been for this cause the French would have been superior in Italy, and their allies supported: whilst, on the contrary, the power of the French being ruined, the allies, abandoned to themselves, were obliged to take the law from the conquerors, by resisting whom the Florentines found themselves involved in a fatal war, whereby they entirely lost their liberty.

After the change of government in Florence, some young men, who had assumed the custody of the palace, had voluntarily armed themselves. They occasioned more fear than tranquillity to the government; and the gonfaloniere, for greater security, had caused to be enrolled amongst them various others of his relations and friends. The contrary party, thinking that this force was armed for them, thought of reducing it to a corps

are variously related by Giovio, Guicciardino, and others. I have followed the detail which the learned Robertson gives of it,—History of Charles V., book 5.

authorized by the government. Philip Pandolfini, therefore, presented himself to the signiory, demanding a flag with the motto *Libertas*, under which all their favourites would afterwards join. The magistracy saw the importance of the request, and the design of the turbulent agitators; whence, instead of this dangerous provision which would have put arms into the hands of a party, they took the expedient of arming the people indistinctly. A decree being made, which rendered vain the design entertained by the fanatic, one of them (James Alamanni) grew so angry at it, that, reviling the signiory and the council, he picked a quarrel with Leonardo Ginori, and coming to blows, the people meeting in concourse, Salviati began to excite them to revolt; but, being arrested, he was condemned to death, after a short process, as a seditious man, and the sentence carried into execution the same day*. Probably, both the sentence and the execution thereof were too precipitate; but he was one of the most dangerous and turbulent citizens, and of a violent character. In the tumult of the year before, in which the first useless attempt was made to expel the Medicis, he had violated the majesty of the government by wounding Frederick de Ricci and the Gonfaloniere Guicciardini; had daringly intimated to Philip Strozzi, when he saw him frequently going to the palace to consult with the gonfaloniere, that, if his life was dear to him, he should abandon that practice; all his crimes, therefore, being put together, it will not appear that he was condemned unjustly.

While the enemies of the gonfaloniere were intent upon spying upon his actions to ruin his credit, and take

* See Segni, History, book 2., Varchi, book 7., who relate the fact with some difference.

him away from the palace, an accident occurred, which was the most opportune for their designs. We have seen that he was really a lover of liberty, but a very moderate man ; that he hated violent measures ; and, after the expulsion of the Medicis, had taken care to bridle as much as he could the rage of their enemies, causing even the ancient friends of that house to be admitted to the offices, the greater part of whom were, from practice, the most intelligent persons in the art of government ; and that he endeavoured not to exasperate the pontiff by too violent measures. He, therefore, kept a secret correspondence in Rome with James Salviati by means of Giacchinotto Serragli. He had just received a letter, which, although it was said therein that the pope was a friend to the liberty of Florence, contained, nevertheless, expressions adapted to generate suspicion, since he invited the gonfaloniere to send his son Piero in some place without the state near Rome, in order to treat for verbally what was necessary to effect by actions. This letter, falling by unpardonable negligence from the pocket of the gonfaloniere, came into the hands of one of his enemies among the signiors, James Gherardi, who concerted the ruin, and even the death, of Capponi upon that paper. Having communicated it to his companions, and particularly to the enemies of the former, having made copies, which he dispersed artfully through the city, he called armed people to the palace, and having given the custody thereof to the enemies of the gonfaloniere, they endeavoured to put him to death by a precipitate trial*. He was saved by those members of the magistracy, who were fully acquainted with the

* The more minute circumstances of this event are differently related by Varchi, book 8 ; and by Signi, book 2. The letter itself,

goodness and rectitude of his intentions ; the party, however, for cashiering him, soon prevailed, and Francis Carducci was elected in his stead. The deposed gonfaloniere, being afterwards summoned before the judges to give an account of the letter, spoke with so much gravity and certainty, that, upon clearly explaining the end for which he carried on that correspondence, he was fully pardoned ; and being obliged on the following day to return home privately, he was accompanied by almost all the first citizens, and the people, who came to meet him upon his leaving the palace. He was afterwards visited by the foreign ambassadors.

of which each pretends to give a literal copy, is nevertheless different, although the sense is nearly the same. Signi relates that Gherardi, upon the measure proposed by him not prevailing of cutting off the head of the gonfaloniere, rose up, and drew forth a dagger, exclaiming, “ This shall overcome the party if the stones do not,” &c. &c.— This is the manner they deliberated in the councils of the Florentine republic.

CHAPTER V.

LEAGUE OF BARCELONA.—HIPPOLITUS IS CREATED CARDINAL.—AGREEMENT BETWEEN KING FRANCIS AND THE EMPEROR.—USELESS EMBASSY TO CÆSAR.—THE FLORENTINES CHOOSE MALATESTA BAGLIONE AS GENERAL.—MICHAEL ANGIOLO BUONARROTTI RETURNS TO HIS NATIVE LAND.—FORTIFIES THE CITY.—MOVEMENT OF THE PRINCE OF ORANGE AGAINST FLORENCE.—EIGHT THOUSAND IMPERIALISTS JOIN ORANGE.—FRUITLESS SORTIE OF STEPHEN COLONNA.—RAPHAEL GIROLAMI IS CHOSEN GONFALONIERE.—SACRED ORATORS INFLAME THE FLORENTINES.—CELEBRATED CHALLENGE BETWEEN TWO CITIZENS.—THE FLORENTINES ATTACK THE SPANISH CAMP.—EXECUTIONS AGAINST THE FAVOURERS OF THE MEDICIS.—VALOUR AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF FERRUCCIO.—THE FLORENTINES ATTACK THE GERMAN CAMP.—WANT OF PROVISIONS IN FLORENCE,—FERRUCCIO CALLED TO DEFEND IT.—SUSPICION OF TREACHERY IN MALATESTA.—THE PRINCE OF ORANGE MEETS FERRUCCIO.—BATTLE OF GAVINIANA.—DEATH OF THE PRINCE OF ORANGE.—FERRUCCIO IS PUT TO DEATH BY MARAMALDO.—HIS QUALITIES.—TREACHERY OF MALATESTA.—THE CITY IS OBLIGED TO SURRENDER.—CONDITIONS OF THE CAPITULATION NOT OBSERVED.—QUALITIES OF THE CARDINAL HIPPOLITUS DE MEDICIS.—HIS COUSIN ALEXANDER ARRIVES AT FLORENCE.—ALEXANDER DECLARED LORD OF FLORENCE.—CHANGE OF THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT.—DESCENT OF THE EMPEROR UPON ITALY.—CATHERINE DE MEDICIS.—CHARACTER OF PHILIP STROZZI.—DEATH OF CLEMENT VII. AND HIS QUALITIES.—THE CARDINAL FARNESE IS ELECTED POPE, AND ASSUMES THE TITLE OF PAUL III.

THE states of Italy desired nothing more ardently than peace, which all had reason to hope for from the

exhausted condition of the belligerent powers, the various fortunes which had attended past events, and the uncertainty of the future. The Florentines sighed for it like any little power which can be easily crushed, little knowing that one of the conditions of the future peace was to be the ruin of their republic.

Pope Clement, after having encountered so many melancholy vicissitudes,—after escaping from a cruel disease, during which he had created Hippolitus de Medicis cardinal, turned again his attention to affairs; and, seeing the fortune of the French declining in Italy, endeavoured to unite himself with Cæsar. In this treaty he obtained so many advantages, that it appeared that the Emperor, as if ashamed that the pope should have received so many injuries and insults from his arms, wished to make him an honourable compensation for the same. The alliance was concluded in Barcelona.

^{1529.} Cæsar promised to restore the house of Medicis to Florence with their ancient authority,—to give Margaret, his natural daughter, in marriage to Alexander,—and to put the pope in possession of Modena, Reggio, and Rubbiera; of Cervia and Ravenna, which were occupied by the Venetians; and, finally, to assist him in despoiling the Duke of Ferrara of his states*. The pope, by sending the first time the two young Medicis, with the Cardinal Silvius, to govern Florence, appeared to have destined Hippolitus, the elder, principally for the government, as he had afterwards created him cardinal, and enriched him with estates of the church, honours with which during his life he could still further flatter him. He turned his thoughts, however, to make Alex-

* Guicciard. History, book 19, where we may see all the heads of the treaty in detail.

ander chief in the government: either that he was induced to this step by his natural instability, or because considering him to be his own son, his paternal tenderness prevailed over him. But the lust of dominion, once tasted, is not so easily satiated; nor could the pope have sown a more certain seed of discord between the two young men. The ties of consanguinity have never been sufficient to control ambitious desires; and history presents us with a long series of tragic events which have occurred from the Theban brothers down to the Mussulman rulers. Not even milder manners, which a better civilization or a meek religion have taught, have been able to bridle the passion of ambition; and examples of this description are not wanting in these two young men, as in others of the Medicean family.

In the mean time, the tempest was threatening around Florence, nor could the Florentines indulge any other hope and support than in the succour of the French, who, although beaten in Italy, had, nevertheless, sufficient force to oppose the designs of the pope, if the Florentines joining with them could have made every exertion to maintain liberty; but, unfortunately for them, the terms of an agreement between the emperor and the King of France was publicly made known. The latter, desirous of getting back his sons, who were hostages in the hands of Cæsar, tired of the adversities he had suffered, had cooled his martial ardour, and, seduced by the pleasures of the court, left the conclusion of the peace to the will of his mother which was stipulated between her and Margaret, the aunt of Charles V., at Cambray upon very disadvantageous conditions for France,—conditions which were afterwards not observed, and gave rise to a new war.

Although the Florentines were said to be compre-

hended in the treaty of peace for mere formality, they were, as well as the other confederates, abandoned by the king, who, ashamed of the dishonourable part he had played, for several days would not receive their ambassadors under various pretexts ; and when he finally received them, it was not in public audience,—and made the best excuses he could, by adorning his treachery with distant hopes, and with those courteous verbosities which monarchs and courtiers are wont to spend as real coin, but which the wise agents to whom they are given know how to reduce to their proper value*.

Seeing the danger daily increasing, and knowing that Cæsar was approaching Genoa, the Florentines sent him four ambassadors, Nicholas Capponi, Thomas Soderini, Matthew Strozzi, and Raphael Girolami. They were coldly received by Cæsar, and harshly by the grand chancellor, advised by the former to give satisfaction to the pope, and reproached by the latter for having given succour to the French arms ; and were told that, consequently, Florence had lost all those privileges which imperial authority supposed to have a right to give or to take away at its option from every city of Italy. So great, however, was the obstinacy of some of the ambassadors, that they refused to write to Florence the answer given by the emperor, fearing to precipitate the government in the agreement ; but Capponi, with his usual loyalty and love of country, and even with tears in his eyes, persuaded his companions to write the replies of Cæsar to the signiory without any varnish, and represented to them the necessity the state was under of making an accommodation with the pope†.

The election of four ambassadors to the pope was the

* Guicciard. History, book 19.

† Segni History, book 3.

consequence of these letters. They received, however, no commission, because Girolami having returned from the embassy, and finding the members of the government vacillating, endeavoured to persuade them to make a defence, nor had he much difficulty in doing so, since a fierce party existed, which, although it saw the great difficulty of making any resistance, had, however, too much offended the pope to hope for any pardon, and preferred rather to be buried under the ruins of their native country than come to any agreement.

The virtuous Capponi was coming to Florence after the fruitless embassy to the emperor, in order to try some method of conciliation,—but, being taken ill at Castel Nuovo, in the Garfagnana, he died of grief at seeing the ruin of Florence so imminent, exclaiming in his last moments,—
*What have we brought this miserable country to?**

Whilst, in the confusion in which Florence found herself, the members of the government were contending with vain orations, dictated more by animosity than a love of country†, the pope, who was not willing to listen to any other agreement than that the Florentines should give themselves up to his discretion, hastened to send against his native country the remains of those barbarous assassins, from whom he had suffered so many torments, and whose massacres and conflagrations he had been an eye-witness to in miserable Rome.

All hope of agreement being now cut off, the Florentines prepared themselves for the most vigorous defence, and chose Malatesta Baglione general of all their forces.

* Segni History, book 3; and Life of Nicholas Capponi.

† In the History of Segni, book 3, we read the harangues of Bernardo of Castiglione and Lorenzo Signi, to defend or to accommodate each other; a production probably of the fancy of the historian.

His father had been put to death by Pope Leo, which led them to hope he would prove an irreconcilable enemy to the Medicis; but they probably deceived themselves, as he appeared to enclose a perfidious mind in a body weakened by scandalous diseases; and if he was not already a traitor, the cowardice or tardiness he evinced in action, caused him to be declared or appear so. Stephen Colonna was elected captain of the Florentine youth, and the two Orsini and Santa Croce entered the military service in Florence.

The part of the city, for which most was dreaded, was the circuit of the walls which extends from San Nicholas to San Friano, because it was commanded by hills, and in which circuit, besides the three present gates, there existed at that time two others, St. Miniat and St. George. This part had already been fortified by the advice of two celebrated architects, Francis of San Gallo, and Michel Angelo Buonarrotti, who being at a distance from Florence, thought it the duty of a good citizen to return and serve his country in so dangerous an emergency*. He had erected a large bastion without the gate of St. Miniat, the wall of which rising over the mountain from the gate which stands before it, surrounded the convent and church of that name; and returning below, he formed a circuit of an oval figure; within which, and upon the wall were placed offensive and defensive weapons, according to the usage of that time. From the principal bastion, or fortress of St. Miniat, on the left hand, a strong parapet came down as far as the street of the gate at San Nicholas, and the Arno; and on the right another parapet was continued

* Ammir. book 30. Varchi, book 8. and 10, says that Buonarrotti afterwards went away, because he was ill used from suspecting Malatesta, and making known his suspicions; he retired to Venice.

rising as far as the gate of St. George, beginning, however, from the gate at St. Miniat's, embracing in it the hills, from which the city might receive damage. The gate of St. George was upon the eminence, and consequently had little need of fortification, there being no other eminence that threatened it. The place most feared was towards the walls at San Pier Gattolini and San Friano, which the hills command; consequently, strong bastions were raised in the intermediate spaces between gate and gate, both externally and internally. The surface that covered the bastions was of rough brick formed of pounded earth, and internally of fagots mixed with large tow and trodden earth, with which pliant materials, which were either the invention of Michel Angelo, or such was the military usage of that age, they endeavoured to resist and destroy the force of the artillery. Bastions and ramparts had been erected too on the other side of the city, in various places, either at the gates, or between gate and gate, and a long and broad ditch was excavated near the walls of the monastery of Ripoli as far as Gualfonda*. To prevent the enemy from establishing himself near the walls, the houses, and suburbs, to the distance of a mile, were razed to the ground, plants and trees were cut to pieces, gardens were levelled, and the country around was reduced to a perfect desert. Many devastations of property were made in hatred of the masters who possessed it, and the palaces of Careggi, of Castello, the habitations of the Medicis, and the villa of James Salviati were set fire to. If these devastations were made at the instigation of the gonfaloniere, this man evinced a desire of precipitating the Florentine youth into such animosities

* Varchi, Hist. book 10.

towards the Medicis, as would render all accommodation still more impracticable.

The Prince of Orange had already left the pontifical state for Tuscany, taking with him 8,000 men, Germans, Italians, and Spaniards; a small but brave force, although only 3,000 Germans remained of those who had sacked Rome, the remainder having perished either by sword or pestilence. The pope added 10,000 infantry. Perugia, which was governed by Malatesta Baglione, towards which this army was moving, made an agreement with the pope.

The prince advanced towards Cortona, which city, although she resisted bravely the first attack, not having a sufficient garrison, nor expecting succour, surrendered, but was fined only in a contribution of 20,000 ducats. Cortona being lost, Arezzo might still have made a long and valorous resistance, and have detained the enemy; but Anthony Francis Albizzi thinking it more advantageous to conduct the whole garrison to defend the capital, than remain cut off with it, marched towards Florence, leaving only two hundred men in the fortress: and although upon his arrival in Figline, where Malatesta was, his conduct was disapproved, and 1,000 infantry were sent back to Arezzo, this precaution proved useless, because the minds of the Aretines had already begun to vacillate, and the Prince of Orange arriving, and not wishing to lose time in fighting them, conceded to them the most honourable conditions, viz., that they should neither return under the power of the Medicis, nor obey the Florentine republic, but were to be governed freely under the protection of Cæsar.

From hence the Prince advanced as far as Figline, whilst Ramazzetto, a general of the pope, entered Mugello with 3,000 infantry. The most prudent persons,

who were increased greatly in number by the approach of danger, now advised the agreement, which was rejected by the magistrates who were composed of the greatest enemies of the Medicis. The prince advanced slowly, and arriving on the 27th of September, between Figline and Ancisa, halted there for about fifteen days, probably to wait for the artillery he had demanded at Sienna. He finally appeared in sight of Florence. The greedy soldiers when arrived at the *apparita*, contemplated the beauty and the air of opulence which the city and the numerous villas which surrounded it offered to their eye, and devouring her riches as it were in their imagination, exclaimed, whilst brandishing their pikes in the air in a ferocious manner: *Prepare, Florence, your brocades of gold, we are coming to purchase them with the measure of our pikes.* (*Apparecchia, o Firenze, i tuoi broccati d' oro che noi venghiamo a comprarli a misura di picche**).

On the 24th of October the prince posted his troops upon the hills of Montici, of Gallo, and Giramonte, where making a trench, he encamped the vanguard. His army, however, extended itself in such a manner as to surround with a semicircle all that part of Florence, situated on the left bank of the Arno, which extends from the East, near the gate of St. Nicholas, to the West, as far as that of San Friano, and having posted his artillery, he began to batter the principal bastion. We easily perceive how imperfect the art of managing artillery was in those days. The Prince ordered the steeple of S. Miniatur, from whence a piece of artillery had done damage to his camp to be battered with four cannons: after one hundred and fifty useless shots, two of the cannon bursted, and he abandoned the enterprise.

* Varchi Hist. book 10.

Skirmishes, in the mean time, took place, in which the Florentine youth greatly distinguished themselves. So full of ardour were they, that with an army, small in number for so large a city, and scantily provided with artillery, the prince sufficiently perceived the difficulties of the undertaking. But all the measures that were taken conspired to the disadvantage of the Florentines. The emperor had arrived at Bologna, to receive the imperial crown from the hands of the pope, who had also arrived there. Many important affairs were treated of, and all terminated in favour of the pope. The investiture of the duchy of Milan was given to the falling Francis Maria Sforza, and peace made with the Venetians, who were obliged, however, to restore to the emperor all the places they had occupied upon the coast of the kingdom of Naples, and to the pope, Ravenna and La Cervia, and to pay Cæsar a large sum of money. War with them would have been serviceable to the Florentines, because it would have kept the imperial forces distracted.

Peace being made, 8,000 imperialists, with twenty-five pieces of artillery, left Lombardy for the Prince of Orange, which gave greater vigour to the siege of Florence; so that, between cavalry and infantry, not less than 34,000 combatants were either around the city of Florence, or in her states. The Florentine troops were only 13,000 in number; 7,000 of which were in Florence, the remainder dispersed throughout Tuscany*.

Various fruitless treaties were entered into between the pope and the city shortly before his arrival at Bologna, as well as during his sojourn in the latter place. There was a moment, which, if it had been seized

* Segni Hist. book 3.

opportunely by the Florentines, might have led them to an accord with the pope upon excellent conditions. During the time that the pope on one side, and Cæsar on the other, went to meet each other in Bologna, news was received that the Turks were besieging Vienna with a very numerous army. Then it was that the pope, dreading that the emperor would be obliged to turn his forces there, ordered excellent conditions of agreement to be proposed: viz., that he would maintain the free government, with the usual council for the creation of magistrates, and with the civil force as it was at that time; so that his nephews were received again in Florence to live as citizens; that the arms of the Medicis should be put up again; a gonfaloniere created for life, for whose election, upon sixty being named, who were to be balloted for, he wished to propose ten; that a council should be chosen of eighty or of an hundred, for life, of which he would also nominate ten, who, consequently, could not be excluded; and that his niece, Catharine, should be given up to him, who was still in the hands of the Florentines*.

These were conditions worthy of being accepted; but if fear on one side had dictated them, hope, originating on the other, caused them to be rejected. This moment, therefore, being lost, the Turkish army having retired from Vienna, and Cæsar set at liberty to assist the pope, the latter re-assumed his usual severity, and pretended that the Florentines should be placed at his discretion. The siege went on, and the Florentines seeing the danger increasing, sent fresh ambassadors to the pope, before he left Bologna. They were treated by him with the greatest harshness, nay, laughed at, and detained as

* Segni Hist. book 3.

smugglers before the court of Cæsar, and all the foreigners who had arrived at it, for the coronation*.

These, and various other negotiations for an agreement, failed. Considering all the circumstances, there is every reason to accuse the Florentines of obstinacy and imprudence, for not having accepted some means of accommodation, even had they been obliged to restore the Medicis to Florence, with their ancient authority, rather than remain exposed to so dangerous a war. If the domination of that house appeared to them grievous, they might have ceded temporarily; since it would not have been difficult, at a proper season and opportunity, to have retaken from them legally, an authority which would have always appeared usurped in a city which preserved a form of liberty. Repeated experience has shewn the facility of this. Cosmo had been expelled, and saved from death rather through the weakness and avarice, than the charity, of his enemies. Piero, his son, had run the greatest risks. The conspiracy of the Pazzi was little short of completely extinguishing that family. Piero, son of Lorenzo, had been expelled, and not long since, Alexander and Hippolitus. The death of the pope, the absence of the hostile army, and a hundred other political events, might have furnished the means to the Florentines, either of expelling an inexpert youth, like the Duke Alexander, or of reducing him to the level of other citizens. In the precarious and illegal

* Their equipage being visited, bobbins of spun and unspun gold were found in the portmanteaus, not indeed of some of the ambassadors, but of Rucellai, who had no character in the embassy, and had joined them in the journey from mere curiosity, and great noise and laughter was made about it.—*Varchi Hist.* book 11. *Giovio*, a writer sold to Pope Clement, attributes to the ambassadors what only happened to one of the suite.—*Hist.* book 28.

manner, in which the Medicis had hitherto held the state, no person could sustain himself in it, but a man endowed with great political talents: history teaches us how rare such men are to be found. Prudence, therefore, counselled to yield to time; but prudence is never attended to amidst factions.

The imperialists, as we have observed, were posted upon the Florentine hills, but very widely apart. Some corps, therefore, had no immediate communication, and Stephen Colonna thought of attempting a blow against that body which was situated at S. Margarite, at Montici. On the night of the 13th of December he went out of the gate of S. Nicholas, with about 2,000 men, and marching quietly came up with the enemy whilst he was immersed in sleep, and attacked him vigorously. Upon a signal agreed upon, of two shots of artillery, John of Turin and Octavian Signorelli were to come out at the gate of S. George and S. Pier Gattolini, with two other corps, and attack the enemy on the flank: but, as frequently happens in concerted operations, either these corps arrived not at the proper time, or the enemy was awakened by the noise of a great number of hogs issuing from a sty, the gate of which they had accidentally broken, which, running against the legs of the combatants, made a great noise, or that both these accidents occurred, the whole imperial army was soon in arms, and hastening to the aid of the assailed, Colonna was obliged to retreat, without, however, having suffered loss*.

The siege was now turned into a blockade. The Prince of Orange, in order to deprive the Florentines of one of the most important roads by which they ob-

* Segni Hist. book 4. Jov. Hist. book 28.

tained provisions, which was Signa, ordered it to be attacked; the succours were tardy, and it was taken with a heavy loss. Several skirmishes of little moment took place upon the Pisan territory, between Piero Colonna, who scoured the country with a body of imperialists, and Hercules Rangone, who had joined the service of the Florentines with the troops of the Duke of Ferrara. These were attended with various fortune.

Around the city nothing very memorable occurred at the close of the year, but the death of two brave officers, who served the republic, Santa Croce and Orsino, who, being wounded upon the hill of S. Miniat by the splinters of a column, which was struck by the enemy's artillery, afterwards died of their wounds.

It was now time, either to change or to confirm the gonfaloniere. Carducci attempted to gain this ^{1530.} post in vain, and Raphael Girolami, a man, the most enraged against the Medicis, and the most fanatic for liberty, was chosen. At the same time the baton of general was given to Malatesta, who had hitherto only enjoyed the title of Governor of the Militia. D. Hercules d' Este had hoped for that appointment*.

The imperial camp had received other troops and artillery from Lombardy. The circle of the enemy was therefore extended, who occupied Bellosguardo with the adjacent hills as far as the gate of S. Friano, viz., all the side of the Arno situate to the south. A corps of Germans had arrived from the other side of the Arno, two at San Donato in Polverosa, and another at the abbey of Fiesole. The walls of Florence were still untouched. The enemy were molested with little actions. One of these proved fatal to Anguillotto, a Pisan, a

* Varchi, book 11. Amm. book 30. Jov. Hist. book 28.

brave officer, who had first borne arms with the enemy, but from differences with the Count Pier Maria, his colonel, had abandoned his standards, and gone over to the Florentines: the imperialists, therefore, being irritated, sought an opportunity of getting hold of him. Coming out of the gate of Santa Croce with a few of his men, and being taken suddenly by the enemy, who had laid snares for him, he was wounded, and taken prisoner, after a brave resistance, and barbarously put to death by the Count San Secondo*. Another affair, far more warm, took place without the gate which leads to Prato, in which the generals of both sides were engaged, and where reciprocal proofs were given of determined valour.

In the mean time the Florentines were without all hopes of succour and protection. King Francis, obliged, in order to get his sons again from the prejudicial agreement, had not only neglected the interests of the Florentines, but saw himself under the necessity, in order to avoid every suspicion of favouring them, of commanding Malatesta and Colonna publicly, as attached to his service, to abandon the Florentines, (although he secretly caused it to be insinuated to them to remain,) and to recall his ambassador, the Signior Vigli from Florence, although he left Emilio Ferretti, his secret agent. This abandonment, however feigned, injured the Florentines, because it continually deprived them more of credit; and the report of a disgrace in political affairs is as prejudicial as the disgrace itself, since each party abandons that which is deserted by the powerful †.

* Varchi Hist. book 11.

† Fatis accede Deisque
Et cole felices, miseros fuge.

The courage of the Florentines, however, failed not in maintaining itself by all possible means. It was now Lent, and the preachers, too, on the part of Heaven, inflamed the citizens with the love of country, and inspired them with courage. Amongst the rest, Friar Benedict, of Fogano, and Friar Zaccaria, of Fivizzano, were greatly distinguished. They were Dominicans, an order which having retained the principles and the fervour of Savonarola, was always a zealous promoter of democracy. The former, gifted with that artful eloquence, which is so well acquainted with the manner of making religion serve political ends, preached one day, in imitation of Friar Jerome, in the hall of the grand council, where on this occasion he inflamed all the people. After having prophesied with the texts of scripture, which he interpreted as he pleased, that, after so many adversities, Florence was finally to enjoy an uninterrupted felicity under the shade of liberty; after having brought tears, alternately, of sorrow and of joy, from the eyes of the audience, he handed a standard to the gonfaloniere, on one side of which was drawn a victorious Christ with soldiers defeated at his feet, on the other, the cross, the Florentine arms, or colours, pronouncing the miraculous words once announced to Constantine, that with this he should conquer*.

These discourses and analogous processions so far inflamed the Florentines, that not content with holding themselves on the defensive, which was going on well, (as the artillery of the imperialists had hitherto made no impression upon the walls, and had only been employed against those bastions which injured the camp,) they

* Varchi, book 11. “Cum hoc et in hoc vinces.”

boldly demanded to be led out of the gates against the enemy. Malatesta was always repugnant to granting this request, and found himself only obliged to yield to the general ardour, which was employed in various sorties, which were attended with reciprocal loss.

Nor was a private duel wanting, as in the times of knight-errantry. Lewis Martelli, whatever might be the private animosity that urged him, sent a challenge to John Bandini, because the latter had taken up arms against his country, as her enemy*. Although John honourably excused himself by asserting, that he was not there to fight, but to see his friends, such was the obstinacy of Martelli, that the former could not refuse without incurring great disgrace. The challenge was accepted, and two seconds were added: Dante, of Castiglione to Martelli, Aldobrandi to Bandini. They fought in an enclosed ring, with the sword, before the Florentines and imperialists. Fortune was equal, and the injuries received were reciprocal. Aldobrandini was killed on the field by Dante of Castiglione: Martelli, however, having received a wound on the eye, whence the blood, gushing out, impeded his sight, was finally obliged to surrender as conquered; and upon being brought to the city, soon died, either from the wound he had received, or the troubles of his mind.

But Malatesta, no longer able to restrain the impatience evinced by the Florentine youth to attack the enemy, gave the necessary dispositions for the assault, which became afterwards almost general. He chose to begin with the camp of the Spaniards, who were posted upon the hills, in face of S. Pier Gattolini. No reason

* Varchi, book 11. and Segni, book 4. add that he was moved, too, by an amorous rivalship for Marietta de' Ricci, wife of Nicholas Benintendi.

was given for this preference. The Spanish troops by common consent, were the bravest, and therefore the hope of overpowering them was less. Prudence should have taught him to attack the weaker bodies with troops particularly who were not inured to warfare; nor is the excuse adduced by Giovio in favour of Malatesta of much avail, viz., that if the Florentines had routed the Spanish troops, the enemy's courage would have sunk, and their own wonderfully increased; since not the most difficult, but the easiest, blows ought first to be attempted. It seems that Malatesta, who never appears with much credit in this war, having been always of opinion not to attack the enemy, but hold himself on the defensive, seeing his opinion rejected, wished to persuade them of the truth of it by fact, and afterwards conducted the Florentines to the most difficult enterprise. Be this as it may, Octavian Signorelli, with many Perugian officers, and a body of the most resolute troops, made a sortie on the 5th of May out of the gate S. Pier Gattolini, against the enemy, who, being posted upon the hill of Oliveto, had drawn a trench on one side almost to that gate upon the Roman road on the other, as far as that of Pisa.

While the Florentines on this side attacked the Spaniards with intrepidity, another column, under the command of Bartolomew Monte, and Ridolfi of Assisi, coming out of the gate of S. Friano, attacked the enemy on the flank; whilst a third column was to co-operate with the other from the gate of S. Giorgio. Amico of Venafro, however, who was to command it, having been cruelly put to death by Colonna, on account of a private dispute, this column having lost its leader, did not march. In this affair, the brave Spanish infantry were wavering, and had been nearly routed; but joining again,

and animated by their general, Baracane, they sustained themselves.

The Prince of Orange, hearing the noise of battle, sent Andrew Castello with the Italian infantry, to the support of the Spaniards: Don Ferrante Gonzaga pushed forward his light horse to their aid. Nor did succours fail in arriving from the city to the Florentines, whose courage was increased by the death of the Spanish general, Baracane. Both sides fought with the greatest bravery for more than four hours; but as the enemy were continually increasing, and were superior alike in number, in discipline, and in position, the Florentines were obliged to retreat, which they effected in the best order. Many distinguished officers perished on both sides. On that of the Florentines, Octavian Signorelli, and Lewis Macchiavel, the son of the celebrated secretary, deserved to be mentioned; on that of the imperialists, besides Baracane, Cencio, a Neapolitan, was slain; nor were less than five hundred left on the field on both sides. Although Malatesta reproached them with having chosen to fight against his opinion, we cannot deny their valour the greatest praise. An army, in great part composed of men not inured to arms, and in whom courage supplied the place of discipline, fought with the best troops of Europe, who were the conquerors of the French, and of Italy, who were posted so much more advantageously upon the hills, and in the trenches; and the issue was still equal. It was also the opinion, that had it not been for the unexpected misfortune which attended Venafro, and the third column had joined the Florentines, the victory would have been theirs*.

* Varchi Hist. book 11. Jov. book 28. Ammir. book 30.

In the mean time, every resource was called into action to follow up the war with vigour. The want of money to pay the foreign troops caused hands to be laid even upon the sacred, after having made use of the private, plate: much was taken from various churches, and from St. John's the cross of gold, which was adorned with rich gems, of which latter precious material the pompous mitre even was robbed, which had been presented by the pontiff Leo to the chapter of the cathedral of Florence; and every other consideration was made subservient to the ardour evinced for the defence. This expedient might have been tolerated; but some time before, another very unjust one had been had recourse to upon the estates of the declared rebels, whereby, besides giving to the magistrates a power which the laws abhor,—that of extending the decrees upon past contracts,—not only had estates which were confiscated by a just balance been put to sale, but those persons, even, whom the magistrate chose were obliged to purchase them*.

The government wanted the armed Florentine youth to take a solemn oath to maintain that form of government even till death. On the 15th of May, a joyful day for Florence, on account of the liberty which had been recovered three years before, the magistrates assembled in Santa Maria del Fiore, the mass of the Holy Ghost was chanted, after which the first magistrate went out, and sat before the church. The silver altar of St. John stood upon the square, under an ample canopy adorned with all its relics. The Florentine youth were all assembled in the square of *Santa Maria Novella*, under sixteen ensigns, or banners. Hence they regularly began their march to the square of St. John, two by two, and passed before the altar where two of the clergy

* Varchi Hist. books 10. and 11.

stood with the book of the gospel in their hand. The people, who are always moved by whatever is shewy, especially if religion is concerned in it, took fresh courage at this august function. 3,000 young men from the ages of eighteen to forty, and 2,000 armed from those of forty to fifty-five, were reckoned in this assemblage.

The warmer fanaticism in the cause of liberty became, the greater the danger shewed itself, by so much the more the hatred against the traitors, or those even who were suspected of treason, increased. James Corsi, captain of the Florentines at Pisa, and his son John, from intercepted letters were suspected of entertaining designs of delivering Pisa over to the enemy. Giachinotti, a prudent and moderate man, was sent there, who caused them to be arrested, and having compiled the process against them, sent it to Florence. He had the delicacy not to order them to be put to torments, as it was his duty to have done, since the depositions given by the father corresponded not with those of the son: their condemnation to death arrived, which was carried into execution. Giachinotti had only done his duty, and even moderately. He had obeyed his government; but this, nevertheless, in the eyes of the pope, became an unpardonable crime. We can neither condemn the sentence of death as unjust, which the Franciscan friar, Vittorio Franceschi, suffered, if he was convicted, as is asserted, of having attempted to spike the artillery of Florence; nor must Lorenzo Soderini escape the accusation of traitor, for giving information to Baccio Valori, and, through him, to the enemy's camp, of what happened in Florence, and we shall not find the punishment of having him hanged*, too severe; but that atrocious

* Varchi Hist. book 11. Ammir. book 20.

fanaticism, which condemned persons to death even for a word spoken in praise of the Medicis, merits our execration. The imprudent nephew of Marsilio Ficino was put to death for having publicly maintained that Cosmo had really deserved the name of father of his country ; and Charles Cocchi had his head taken off, for vague words he had used, which were more imprudent than criminal *. Nor was the mad Carafulla, who bore so strong an affection to the house of Medicis pardoned : by drawing the people after him with his follies, he was thought to have preached or announced the return of that family †. His madness alone saved him, indeed, from death, but not from a prison.

If Florence thus defended herself with obstinate valour, the remainder of her states were nearly lost. Pistoia, after a great tumult and contest between the parties Cancelliera and Panciatica, was abandoned by the Florentine commissary, who no longer hoped to be able to keep it; Prato had the same fate; Pietra Santa, and Mutrone surrendered to the imperialists. Other cities and castles of the Florentines were marked at by the enemy : San Gemignano was taken; Volterra threatened, where an imprudent step taken by Covoni had exasperated that people to such a degree, that they were near rebellion, when Bartolo Tebaldi was sent there, and was received benignly by the Volterrans, but introduced only with few people into the city. He, however, perceiving that an agreement was treating of between the former

* They are variously exposed by Varchi, book 11. by Segni, book 4. Ammir. book 30.

† This man went shouting through the city, “ Canaille of people, you have to drink out of this flask”—(“ Popolaglia Canaglia a questo fiasco hai da bere.”)

and Alexander Vitelli, arrived with his people upon the Volterrana territory, fearing the faith of the citizens, retired into the fortress, and began to play upon the city with his artillery. The Volterrana had recourse to the pope; promised to give themselves up to him, and demanded of him heavy artillery to conquer the fortress. The pope accepted the proposal, and ordered cannon to be brought from Genoa.

Francis Ferruccio, governor of Empoli, distinguished himself in this war more than any other Tuscan. He was a Florentine citizen, a merchant, but endowed with a noble mind, and furnished by nature with military talents, which appeared to be hereditary in this house. His grandfather Anthony Ferruccio had gained great reputation in the war of Pietra Santa under Lorenzo the Magnificent, and his elder brother Simon in the war of Pisa. Francis, who was mayor in Radda in the year 1527, had valiantly defended it from the inroads of the Siennese. Being sent commissary of the Florentines with their bands in the unfortunate war of Naples, where by the prudence and courage he displayed, he saved the remains of them, he had enjoyed every opportunity of exercising himself in arms*. When he was military commissary in Prato, he attempted to bridle the licentiousness of the soldiers, and was opposed by Lorenzo Soderini, the civil mayor, who evinced only pride and incapacity, and it became necessary to separate them. The Florentine government showed what faith they had in Ferruccio, by creating him commissary general in Empoli, a very important place; whereby he frequently furnished Florence with provisions and ammunition, and placed that town in an excellent state of defence.

* Nardi, Hist. book 8., Varchi, book 4, Segni, book 2.

Ferruccio signalized himself shortly afterwards in a very honourable enterprise. The enemy had occupied the city of San Miniato, whence they infested the country, and particularly the road to Pisa. Ferruccio, taking with him a few companies of soldiers, attacked that city, which was defended by excellent Spanish troops. He was among the first of those, who bravely fixed the ladder to the wall, and mounted it, and being followed by his men, in a short time he conquered the place. Without a moment's delay, he assailed the fortress with so much vigour that it surrendered, and had sufficient authority to bridle the licentiousness of the soldiers who were hastening to sack the place. This man, who was never at ease in idleness, hearing now of the loss of Volterra, proposed to the signiory to go himself, and reduce that city to duty. The proposal being accepted, Andrew Giugni was sent in his place to Empoli with fresh troops, who, being pursued by the imperialists, owed their safety to the difficulty of the road they took, whereby the cavalry could not follow them up. Nicholas Strozzi greatly distinguished himself. When these troops arrived in Empoli, Ferruccio, after having recommended the defence of the place to Giugni, departed with a large body of infantry and cavalry for Volterra, and arrived there at the moment when they had received five large pieces of artillery from the pope, and reinforcements of troops. Ferruccio, at the first assault, driving the Volterrans within the walls, who had refused every agreement, entered the fortress, and hardly had his men refreshed themselves, when he attacked the city in various places without loss of time, and fought vigorously until midnight: Ferruccio then caused fire to be set to the part of the city nearest the fortress: the fight was

continued the following day always to the advantage of the Florentines, who got possession of five pieces of artillery, and the Volterrans were obliged to capitulate, and returned under the dominion of the former with their persons and property. More than six hundred were killed and wounded.

The depraved soldiery of those times, who were always encouraged to make dangerous attacks of a place from the hope of sacking it, murmured greatly against the general who had prevented it. The latter, in order to appease them, caused the precious ornaments to be sought for in the convents where they were hidden, threatening those who concealed them with the penalty of death. He respected not even the church plate, which, being melted, served to satiate the avidity of the soldiery, and to spare the city from being further sacked*.

Scarce had Ferruccio recovered Volterra, when he found himself obliged to defend it against Fabrizio Maramaldo, who, arriving before it with 2,500 infantry, proudly ordered it to surrender by means of a trumpeter, and threatened to cut them all to pieces in case of resistance. Ferruccio replied to this intimation of the trumpeter by telling him that, if he dared to return with a similar embassy, he would cause him to be hanged, and going out with a troop of his men entered into a skirmish with Maramaldo, after which the latter, perceiving with what kind of person he had to act, entrenched himself near the city, and sent the trumpeter again with the same intimation, which Ferruccio in a rage, not being able to put up with, caused him to be hanged to the walls, in violation of all the laws of humanity

* Varchi Hist. book 1. Jov. Hist. book 28.

and of nations. The Florentine and imperial troops stood, therefore, some time in front of each other without any movement.

In the mean time Ferruccio, who had the glory of retaking Ferrara, was displeased at hearing of the loss of Empoli. This place had been so well fortified by Ferruccio, that it was enabled to make a long resistance. It was attacked by Inico Sarmiento, with a large body of Spaniards, and by Vitelli, but the enemy was valiantly repulsed at the first assault. Andrew Giugni and Piero Orlandini, however, were cowards, and the passage from cowardice to treachery, is easy. Another Orlandini, called by nickname the chicken (*pollo*), who was in the camp of the Spaniards, treated with his relation for the surrender of the place. At first he was rebutted by Piero, but it appeared afterwards that they agreed, and cared not to call the soldiers to the defence, when he was apprized that the enemy were coming to the attack. The people of the place too had incautiously managed an agreement in the night with the Spaniards; therefore they neither moved at the news of the assault, but paid the penalty of it. The place was so well fortified that the Spaniards, even without fighting, had great difficulty in mounting it, and remained entangled in the lime of the ditch which surrounded it. Having entered it without agreeing to any condition, they sacked it, and pardoned neither the natives nor the garrison. The Marquis del Vasto arrived there, but too late to put a stop to the cruelties committed by the soldiers*.

After the enterprise against Empoli, this force, which was by no means small, was directed against Volterra. The Marquis del Vasto arrived there with Sarmiento;

* Varchi Hist. book 11. Jov. Hist. book 28.

and joining Maramaldo, made various fierce assaults upon that city. The Spaniards were provided with a numerous and heavy artillery, with which they threw down in many places large pieces of the wall. They fought upon the breach with the greatest valour. Fresh ramparts of moveable logs of wood mixed with earth were raised up, the Spaniards were continually repulsed by Ferruccio, who, with the same presence of mind and vigour performed the duty both of commander and of soldier. He was badly wounded, and nevertheless ordered himself to be carried in a chair to the attack, although suffering from fever, where foreseeing and providing against every occurrence, he finally obliged troops who were so inured to warfare, and were provided with the best artillery, with able engineers, and commanded by so experienced a general as the Marquis del Vasto, to make a disgraceful retreat. Many brave officers were killed on the side of the imperialists; Sarmiento, who had taken Empoli; Calcella the Apulian captain of artillery, who was a very valuable officer to Anthony of Leva, on account of the skill he displayed in his profession; Donato da Trottì, who was esteemed little inferior to Calcella, and who had succeeded to his place; and the loss would have been still greater if Ferruccio had not been deficient in powder*.

The news of this brave defence being brought to Florence gave renewed courage to the Florentines, who having been quiet for a long time now loudly demanded to be again led forth to the assault of the enemy's camp. Stephen Colonna promoted this desire, and was as usual opposed by Malatesta, who had been at all times an adviser of cautious measures: the opinion,

* Varchi Hist. book 11. Jov. Hist. book 29.

however, of Colonna prevailed. It was determined upon to attack the German camp, which, entrenched around the convent of S. Donato in Polverosa, was commanded by the Count of Ladrone, and which extended on one side to the great road of the gate to Prato, on the other, to that of the gate to Faenza. If they had succeeded in dislodging the enemy from that post, they would have opened a road to Prato and Pistoia, which were panting to return under the Florentines*.

In the night of the 11th of July, Stephan Colonna came out by the gate to Prato with his troops in their shirts, that they might be known in the dark, and made his way towards the enemy. Malatesta, coming out of Porticciola, extended himself with his men along the bank of the Arno to oppose, if it was necessary, the succours which were endeavouring to pass the Arno from the camp of the Prince of Orange. Another corps came out of the gate of Faenza to take the Germans on the flank by making a circuit, when they heard of the commencement of the assault made by Colonna. The latter having entered the enemy's trenches succeeded in throwing the German camp into disorder, and would easily have routed it, if the Florentines, seeing the Germans fly, had not fallen into confusion in hastening to make a booty of the baggage. Ladrone, who lived in the convent, being awakened, collected together two thousand Germans upon the square of the camp. Colonna in vain called to his men to return to their ranks. In the mean time, having attacked that corps with a part of his men who had remained firm, he found himself unable to break it; on the contrary, he received two wounds, and Virgilio,

* Varchi, Hist. book 11.

a Roman, and other brave officers were killed by the side of him. Malatesta, in the mean time, hearing the fire of artillery from Mount Oliveto, and the drums beating in the camp of the Prince of Orange, ordered the retreat to be sounded, fearing, as he said, that the enemy's cavalry would pass that part of the Arno, which they could ford, and thus shut up the road to retreat. This hasty retreat, however, passed not without reprehension, and was attributed to the envy which rankled in the breast of Malatesta*.

From the history we have hitherto given of the siege of Florence, it may be clearly seen that the enemy's arms were not much dreaded, as the walls and forts remained untouched, and instead of being attacked, the Florentines panted always to attack the besiegers. Another more lingering enemy, however, far more formidable, viz., famine, was fighting against them. The difficulty of transporting provisions was become excessive; as not only those who attempted to convey them were punished with death, but with the most horrible punishments of sanguinary cruelty exercised towards them by the besiegers†. The usual wholesome food was deficient,

* Varchi History, book 11. Jov. book 29. Segni's History, book 4.

† See the Second Satire of Bentivoglio, who carried arms amongst the soldiers of the pope. He relates that a poor countryman, who was bringing provisions to Florence upon an ass, had his virile parts cut off, and his body burnt over a slow fire, and larded like the fowls. It is even the duty of this work to give the whole of this part of the satire, which is addressed to M. Peter Anthony Acciajuola.

Sovra i bei Colli, che vagheggian l' Arno
 E la nostra città, ch' or duolsi et ave
 Pallido il viso, e lagrimoso indarno,
 Son un di quei, che con fatica grave
 Al marzial lavoro armati tiene
 Quel che di Pietro ha l' una e l' altra chiave.
 Qui vivo in mille guai, disage e pene,

and bread was now made either of millet or of acorns; nor was the flesh of horses, of asses, and any other ani-

Onde forza e' di por l' arti in oblio,
 Per cui famose fur Corinto ed Atene :
 Ch' in vece di Catullo e Tibul mio,
 Del Mantuano, e di Colui d' Arpino,
 La Lancia tutto 'l giorno in man tengo io ?
 In vece dell' Albano, e del divino
 Trebbian, che ber coste' solia, gusto uno
 Vie più che aceto dispiacevol vino.
 Un duro pane muffido e più bruno
 Che 'l mantel nostro, amaramente rodo,
 E non n' avendo ancor spesso digiuno
 Se dormir spero a mezza notte, i' odo
 La tromba che m' invita a tor la lancia
 E la celata dispiccar del chiodo :
 E i nemici talor con mesta guancia
 Miro (vi dico il ver) tutto pauroso
 Che 'l capo mi si fori, o braccio, o pancia.
 Quante volte dic 'io meco pensoso :
 Saggio chi stassi dove non rimbomba
 D' Archibugio lo strepito noioso.
 Nè suon orribil d' importuna tromba.
 Nè de tamburo il sonno scaccia a lui
 Nè teme ad or ad or l' oscura tromba.
 O voi prudente, e ben accorto, o voi
 Fortunato Acciajuol ! che lontan sete
 Dai perigliosi casi ove siam noi.
 Piacemi udir che' a sanità vivete
 Coi cari figli ; e vi dirò di queste
 Nuove, che di saper desir avete
 Pochi denari, e gran timor di peste
 Ha questo campo, e sol gli archibugi empi
 Le scaramuccie fanno aspre e funeste.
 Duolmi il veder che i begli antichi esempi
 Non seguano questi capitani, che vanno
 Sotto così vil peso a questi tempi :
 Nè usan quella modestia ch' usata hanno
 Gli antiqui Capitani, chi è palagi
 Le ease non volean ch' avesser danno.
 Ch' insin ai tempj qui non dai disagii
 Di legua astretti, gettati hanno a terra
 Per porli al fuoco i barbari malvagii :
 Solea si nsar che 'l vincitore in guerra
 Spoliava solo in vinto ; e tra noi oggi
 Spogliasi, e cel pugnal di poi s' atterra.
 Conven ch' io miri ovunque scenda, o poggi
 Malgrado mio, fierezze a cerbe e nuove

inal, rejected*. It was, nevertheless, made a capital crime to speak of an agreement.

Per questi vostri già si amari poggi
 Atti orrendi da dir colà' giù dove
 Entra la Sieve nel nostro Arno i nidi
 Forse d' altro uom giammai non visti altrove
 Da otto (e che Spagnuoli eran m' avvidi
 Dal parlar e dal volto) un villanello
 Legato fu, non senza amari gridi,
 Che partito dal suo povero ostello
 A vender biada e fieno iva a Fiorenza
 Di che era carco un picciol asinello.
 Quivi il misero fecer restar senza
 Membro viril, che gli tagliar di botto,
 Sordi a mille miei prieghi, in mia presenza ;
 Ne' sazii fur di tal martir quegli otto
 Ladri, del sangue Italico si ingordi
 Che l'arser ancor tutti col pillotto,
 Come fa Mastro Anton le starne e i tordi
 Nello schidone ; e non però puniti
 Dai Capitani fur rigidi e sordi.
 E veggo altri crudeli atti infiniti
 Che d' onor privan le captive donne
 Presenti i padri e i miseri mariti.
 E tolte lor annella e cuffie e gonne
 Fannosi cuoche, e meretrici tutte
 Quelle che dianzi fur caste e madonne.
 Se Vecchie prendon, o stroppiate, o brutte
 Vi so dir che le concian col bastone
 Se che non hanno mai le luci asciutte.
 Se bella è la prigione, il suo glubbone
 Le mette il tristo, e una berretta in testa,
 Poi l' usa in ogni ufficio di garzone.
 O fortunata, e nou simile a questa
 O degna d' alti onori antica etade ;
 Men acerba e crudel, vie più modesta !
 Allor ch' i capitani fur di bontade
 D' animo invitto, e di virtù ripieni,
 E ogni atto rio fuggir di crudeltade.
 Alma Pace, rimena i dì sereni
 E cou le spiche e con l' oliva in mano
 Col sen di pomi omai ritorna e vieni !

"Upon the beautiful hills, which grace the Arno, and our city, whose countenance is now so pallid and streaming with vain tears, I am one of

* Varchi says that a paul was paid for a rat, which was as much as four pauls in our days at least.

The glorious defence made of Volterra, by Ferruccio, caused all eyes to be turned towards him, as the only

those, who with heavy labour are kept to the martial work, by him who possesses both keys of Peter. Here I live amidst a thousand ills, sorrows, and pains, whence I am obliged to throw into oblivion those arts, by which Corinth and Athens became so famous: for, instead of my Catullus and Tibullus, of the Mantuan, and the Man of Arpino, throughout the long-lived day I bear the lance upon me: instead of the Alban and the divine Trebbian, which I was wont to drink, I taste now a wine, far more unpleasing than vinegar. I gnaw a hard musty bread, more brown than our cloak, and frequently, having none thereof, am obliged to fast. If I hope to lay me down to sleep at midnight, I hear the drum, which invites me to take up my lance, and the rattling of the helmets: and often, with sorrowful countenance, I view the enemy, I speak the truth, full of dread that he will either pierce my head, my arms, or body. How frequently do I exclaim, all thoughtful within myself: Happy is he who stands afar off from the noisy sound of guns, whose sleep is neither chased away by the horrible sound of the importunate drum, nor is continually put in fear of the dark tomb. Oh, you prudent and well-discerning! oh, you fortunate Acciajuolo, who art far removed from the dangerous situation in which we are placed! It is pleasing to me to hear, that you live in health with your dear children; and I will tell you that news which you desire to hear of. This camp has little money, and great dread of plague, and the wicked guns alone make the skirmishes more dire and dreadful. Sorry am I to see that these generals follow not the fine old' examples, but are under heavy reproaches in these times: nor do they practise that modesty, which the ancients practised, who would not that either palaces or houses should receive damage. For the wicked barbarians have thrown to the ground even the temples, not driven to it even by the want of wood, to give them to the flames. It was wont to be the custom, that the conqueror in war despoiled alone the conquered; but with us, now-a-days, we are despoiled, and then struck to the ground with the steel. Whether I descend a vale, or mount a hill, I am obliged to view, wherever I cast my eyes, bitter and new cruelties, which are practised in these your once delightful hills; to tell horrid acts down below, where the Sieve pours its bosom into our Arno, acts, perhaps, never seen by man elsewhere. A countryman was bound by eight men, (and I perceived they were Spaniards, by voice and countenance,) not, however, without uttering piercing cries; this countryman had left his poor cot, to sell hay and corn at Florence, of which articles a little ass was loaded. Here they left the miserable creature without his virile member, which they cut off from the bottom in my presence, deaf to all my entreaties: nor were those eight monsters satiated with this martyrdom, so greedy were they of Italian blood, for they larded him all over, and burnt him just as Master Anthony does the starlings and thrushes upon the spit; and were never even punished for it by the cruel and indifferent captains. And I saw infinite other cruel acts, as the captive women deprived of their honour in the presence of their parents and wretched husbands. And having taken off their

person from whom salvation could now be expected. He was therefore summoned, with his best forces, to the defence of the country. He was created commissary-general, and greater authority given him than had ever been conceded to any general. He was worthy, indeed, of the confidence reposed in him, and was the man most adapted to save his country, if she could be saved. It is easy to comprehend, from the actions which have occurred, that if, instead of Malatesta, Ferruccio had commanded the Florentine troops, the sorties they made would probably have been attended with a different issue.

Ferruccio, having made dispositions for the defence of Volterra, set out for Pisa in three marches, through Vada, Rosignano, and Leghorn, with 1,500 infantry, and a few horse, Maramaldo in vain endeavouring to arrest his progress. Here he was overtaken with a fever, fell sick, and was obliged to halt thirteen days; a delay, which was probably the cause of the ruin of the enterprise, by giving time to the enemy, both to discover his intentions, and to make preparations for surrounding him. Having made, however, the necessary dispositions as hastily as disease would permit him, he left Pisa on the 29th of July, with Paul of Ceri, son of Renzo, with about 3,000 infantry and 500 horse,

rings, their caps, and gowns, they make them cooks and harlots, who before were chaste and matrons. If they take old women, lame or ugly, they beat them with the stick, that their eyes are never dry. If the captive is beautiful, the wretch then puts her on a doublet, and employs her in every office of a servant. Oh, fortunate ancient age, worthy of every honour, unlike to this, far less bitter and cruel, infinitely more modest! When the generals were full of goodness, of unconquered courage, and of virtue, and avoided every dire act of cruelty. Sweet Peace, bring back the serene days, return, and come to us with the ears of corn and the olive in the hand, with the bosom full of fruit!"

commanded by Nicholas Masi, a brave officer of Morea, by Charles of Civitella, and by Amico d'Ar solli. He came upon the Lucchese territory, and, arriving at Pescia, afterwards took the mountain of Pistoia.

This movement was not unknown to the Prince of Orange, and the blame of having revealed the secret fell upon Malatesta. The prince, knowing how important it was that this troop should not enter Florence, chose to march in person to oppose him, with a choice and numerous corps. In the mean time he sent orders to Maramaldo and Vitelli, who were posted between S. Croce and Fucecchio, to follow up Ferruccio, and endeavour to arrest his march. They had with them a body of troops, at least equal, and probably superior; but ventured not to attack him in close order, and contented themselves only with harassing him on the march.

The prince, having got notice of the road Ferruccio was taking, took that of Pistoia, and arrived at Lagone, a place situated between Pistoia and the Castle of Gavinana. There he heard of Ferruccio being at S. Marcello, and from the noise of the musquetry, it might have been supposed he had the imperialists in the rear. After refreshing his men*, he advanced towards Gavinana. Ferruccio left S. Marcello; and if, instead of advancing to Gavinana, he had taken a road to the right, which was more steep, and surrounded with rugged rocks, a road which he saw a number of women going up, with their baggage on their heads, and by

* Drinking in the open air, to the health of various of his friends, a copious shower of rain fell suddenly; whereupon he said, laughing, that Heaven had made their wine water, or rather watered their wine, that they might not go drunk into battle.—Jov. His. lib. 29. Segni Hist. book 4.

which, with a little longer march, he would have arrived at Scarperia, neither the enemy, who was strong in cavalry, would have ventured, nor would have been able to follow him without great disadvantage. It is true that he would probably have lost his heavy baggage; that loss would have been trifling, (said Masi,) had the troops only arrived safe at their destination.

Ferruccio chose not to embrace a counsel which bore the appearance of being dictated by fear; but he was probably ignorant that he would find a picked and superior army at Gavinana, and with the capital enemy at the head of it. The prince could not have brought with him less than 6,000 of his best troops, and reckoning the others, Ferruccio found himself before an enemy, who was three times superior to him*. The prince, Ferruccio, and Maramaldo, arrived at Gavinana almost at the same time. The two latter entered the castle at opposite sides about the same moment, and began the battle. The prince, who was without, marched to attack the five hundred Florentines, who, in order not to be overpowered by the number of horse, had retired to sustain themselves in a thick chestnut grove, where the cavalry could not act. The prince fought upon a bay horse, and confronted Nicholas Masi in single combat, the prince vibrating his sword, Masi an iron mace, with which he struck him various times upon the helmet, but Masi having retired to the chestnut wood, from fear of the men of armour, who were coming to the succour of his adversary, two musket-shots were suddenly fired at the prince, who fell immediately dead to the ground.

* When Ferruccio knew that he had in front of him the prince, with a body of chosen troops, he exclaimed, *Oh, traitor Malatesta!* — Segni Hist. book 4.

This young man was not more than thirty years of age. He was at once an intrepid and an intelligent warrior, magnanimous and liberal, and was beloved by the soldiers*. The death of the prince excited so much terror in the men in armour, that they took to flight in disorder, nor did they halt until they arrived at Pistoia, where they brought the news of his death, and a complete defeat. The Florentines, who were on the other side of the castle, failed not in shouting out *Victory*; but the battle was not over. Vitelli, who was outside the castle, had attacked and routed the squadron of Paulo da Cери, and made every endeavour to enter Gavinana, and relieve Maramaldo. Paul entered it too, almost at the same time, but the disproportion between the number of combatants was too great. Ferruccio and Paul, after having given the greatest proofs of their valour, and surrounded by the killed and wounded, abandoned by the greater part, retired into a house, where they still continued to defend themselves. They were finally obliged to surrender at discretion.

Ferruccio was brought before Maramaldo, who, remembering the messenger he had ordered to be hanged at Volterra, the disgrace he had suffered before that city, and irritated, probably, at the death of the prince, after having upbraided him bitterly, stuck his sword into his throat, and was thus guilty of an act of the greatest inhumanity, unworthy of every honourable military man, in wounding a disarmed enemy who had surrendered

* When the Prince of Orange was at Naples, he had, in the operations of war, ruined the villa of Sannazzaro, who, now dying, and hearing of his death, made a verse that was his last:

“La vendetta d’ Apollo ha fatto Marte.”
Mars has revenged Apollo.

himself*. Ferruccio was endowed with great qualities, with consummate courage, possessed of activity and intelligence in affairs of war, robust in person, and patient of fatigue. Although without education, he was master of an easy and popular eloquence, capable of persuading the multitude. He was, however, fierce and cruel. Since John de Medicis, he was the greatest warrior the Florentines could boast of.

Marzio Colonna was also guilty of an act of barbarity, not less cowardly, in purchasing Amico d'Arsoli from those who had made him prisoner, not to restore him to liberty, but to put him cruelly to death. It is true that the latter had killed his cousin, Scipio Colonna, but this had happened in battle.

In the midst of these acts of cruelty, the generous conduct displayed by the Tuscan, John Cellesi, shines the more conspicuous. He was the enemy of Bernardo Strozzi, and had marched to slay him, but in lawful war. Hearing that he was now a prisoner, and wounded, he ransomed him for 1,000 dollars, ordered his wounds to be charitably attended to, and set him at liberty.

The action of Gavinana, which happened on the 3rd of August, was the most sanguinary which had occurred during this war; it lasted nearly nineteen hours, and about 2,500 men were killed, many of whom were brave and distinguished officers†. With the death of

* Schiavon crudele, ond'hai tu il modo appreso
 Della milizia? in quel Scizia s'intende,
 Che uccider si debba un, poch' egli è preso,
 Che rende l'arme, e più non si difende?
 Dunque uccidesti lui perchè ha difeso
 La patria?—ARISTOTLE, *Canto 36.*

Those verses may be adapted to our case.

† Varchi Hist. book 11. Jov. Hist. book 29. Ammir. book 30. Segni, book 4.

Ferruccio and the rout of his army, the last hope of the Florentine republic vanished, whose fate may be said to have been decided at Gavinana. It may, with much probability, be conjectured too, that, if Ferruccio had remained conqueror, or if he had been able to enter Florence with his troops uninjured, he would probably have caused the siege to be raised. The Florentines, who were always panting to attack the enemy's camp, should have profited of a moment, in which it was without defenders, and deprived of a commander, and, in fact, they wished for nothing more. The want of sincerity in Malatesta, however, in at times setting forth the difficulty which attended the enterprise, at others promising to undertake it, and making only slow preparations, occasioned so much delay, that the news arrived of the defeat of Ferruccio, and the victorious enemy returned to the siege*.

The government, however, notwithstanding the many misfortunes it had suffered, in spite of the common opinion given by the generals, that a treaty should be entered into with the imperialists, still offered resistance; and the people demanded to be led against the enemy, rather than submit to a capitulation. Malatesta, who was supported in his opinion too by Colonna, opposed this measure; and seeing the obstinacy of the people for continuing the war, protested, first in words, that he would rather resign the command, than, by sanctioning the common outcry, become a spectator of the ruin of Florence: he then expressed the same sentiments in a protest in writing, which he caused to be presented to the signiory. This, however, instead of persuading, only irritated the government the more, and, (as doubts

* Varchi Hist. book 11.

of his sincerity were increasing,) it was determined upon to grant him that dismissal, which he had so implicitly demanded in his writing. The determination, however, was expressed in the most honourable terms*, and delivered to him by two senators, accompanied by Andreolo Rinuccini and Francis Zati. Malatesta, who demanded his dismissal, without ever thinking he would obtain it, seeing himself deluded, gave vent to such rage, that, drawing out his dagger, he rushed forward to strike Andreolo, who was reading the paper, and would have killed him, if the weakness of his arm had not given an uncertainty to his aim: the dagger was at last wrested from him.

When this was made known to the government and the people, their anger became excessive. The gonfaloniere, in a rage, and blinded by passion, ordered his arms and horse to be prepared to go against the traitor; the people assembled to rush out against him: but Malatesta immediately occupied the gate of S. Pier Gattolini to defend himself, and caused the artillery to be turned against the city, saying, he would save it in spite of the traitors. Great loss and inevitable ruin would have been the consequence of this proceeding, had not Ceccotto Tosinghi stepped in as mediator, and appeased at once the anger of the gonfaloniere, and the fury of the people. Zanobi Bartolini, a friend of Malatesta, went to speak to him, and the latter having asked pardon of the signiory, tranquillity was restored to the city.

The conduct of the general is not to be excused. If a feeling of contempt at the folly evinced by his fellow-

* These documents are found authentic in the History of Varchi, book 11.

citizens made him ask for retirement, why was he angry because the request was complied with in such honourable terms? Nor can we well understand how ruin must infallibly have followed the last attempt to fight made by the Florentines, since, if it had been attended with as little success as the other attacks, they could have immediately capitulated: was it of importance to him to retire from an enterprise, in which he had no longer to hope either for glory or advantage? Why so much anger? It can be understood in no other manner than by supposing he had secretly held treaties with the pope, and that choosing not to lose at an instant the fruits of his long designs, he constrained (now that opportunity furnished him with a pretext) the Florentines to yield even by force.

Affairs, therefore, being desperate, and provisions entirely failing, the obstinacy of the citizens was overcome, and ambassadors were sent to make an agreement with Gonzaga, who, since the death of the Prince of Orange, commanded the imperial army. Even before the disgraceful affair of Malatesta, the Florentines, almost forced to it by him and the officers, had sought for an agreement; but as an absolute condition was demanded from the city that the Medicis should not be restored to it, the treaty had been done away with. It was now necessary to bend to necessity. Four ambassadors, viz., Baldo Altuiti, doctor of laws, Lorenzo Strozzi, Pier Francis Portinari, and James Morelli, were sent to fix upon the terms of the agreement.

The treaty was concluded on the 12th of August, in the enemy's camp at Montici, between the latter ambassadors on one side, and Ferrante Gonzaga, and Baccio Valori, ambassador of the pope, on the other. The most important conditions were, that a form of govern-

ment should be established within four months, at the pleasure of Cæsar, but with the preservation of the liberty of Florence; that all those who were outlawed on account of the Medicis should be restored; all the prisoners who had been made in the same cause set at liberty; that 80,000 dollars should be disbursed by the city, in two rates, for the pay of the soldiers; that every Florentine citizen had liberty to go away, and carry his effects elsewhere; that the pope and the Medicis would pardon all injuries and cancel them from their memory*.

Thus terminated the siege of Florence, which had lasted about eleven months. The Florentines were conquered not by arms, but by famine and treachery. It was the last siege the city suffered, and the obstinate defence that was made appeared to be dictated by expiring liberty. About 14,000 foreign soldiers, amongst whom were 200 captains or generals, were killed without the city, and about 8,000 citizens, either in Florence or her states; without reckoning the innumerable losses that the territory suffered, in the sackings and devastations which were continually made †. The valour, with which the Florentines fought, deserved a better fate, and a more loyal general. His conduct is condemned by all Florentine historians. It is true that the city, enraged against him, might have converted doubts into certainty, and inspired writers with hatred of him; but besides some of them, such as Varchi and Segni, being considered sincere, (and Varchi was devoted to the reigning house of Medicis,) facts, rather than the authority of historians, must decide. These, considered with

* Varchi Hist. book 11. Jov. book 29. Segni, book 4. Nardi, book 9. Ammir. book 30.

† Varchi, book 11.

an impartial eye, only condemn him too justly, as we have seen in the course of the history. The favour evinced by the pope, too, towards him, by whom he was restored to Perugia with his usual power, appeared an open reward for his services, without saying any thing of the secret ones. If a letter of Malatesta, too, was found upon the defunct Prince of Orange, in which he assured him that, in his absence, he would make no attack upon his camp, the demonstration of his treachery is complete*.

Many atrocious actions occurred, certainly, in Florence during this siege; but these belong to all times, and all places, when the fever of fanaticism has once excited a ferment in minds. We have already been witness to more than one of these dire actions; and in these latter times, Leonardo Bartolini, enraged at the desperate state of affairs, projected that Catherine Medicis, niece of the pope, should be brought upon the walls, and exposed to the artillery of the enemy. She was only transported from the nunnery of the walled (*Murate*) with all decency into that of Santa Lucia, where, being under the direction of the Dominicans, and considered as an hostage, she was in safer custody†.

The conquerors were not tardy in taking revenge. One of the first acts of the new government was the formation of the bailiwick, in order to feed the lovers of liberty with some appearance of it. Having assembled the people at the sound of the mass bell, which was to be the last, twelve persons were named or authorized to reform the government, and dissimulation was carried so

* Segni affirms it with certainty. Varchi, too, produces so many authentic documents, and especially the letters of Ferrante Gonzaga to Frederic, Duke of Mantua, that we can no longer doubt of it.

† Segni Hist. book 4.

far, as to cause Raphael Girolami to be inserted among the number. He was the last gonfaloniere, and had distinguished himself with so much enthusiasm, in the republican government, that he was permitted to fill the office of gonfaloniere for the month of August; which being over, it appeared they were to return to the old order of election. The mask, however, soon fell off. The twelve of the bailiwick elected a hundred and fifty citizens more, who were their associates. The moderation hitherto practised was abandoned, and by one of those examples which are not unfrequent, they gave a proof how little can be trusted to treaties made between the armed people, and the weak who are disarmed. They soon saw the promises, which had been solemnly sworn to, broken. Malatesta without any tolerable pretext, caused the Father Benedict of Fogano, who had been a fanatic preacher in the last siege, to be arrested, who, being brought to Rome, and thrown into an obscure prison in the Castle of San Angelo, was afterwards put to death*.

What, however, more than all, terrified the city, was the beheading, on the 31st of October, of Francis Carducci, Bernard of Castiglione, and James Gherardi. A short time afterwards, Louis Soderini, and John Baptist Cei, who had been among the ten of liberty, and were considered as the fiercest enemies of the Medicis, were also decapitated. They were guilty either of insults towards their arms and statues, or of having held imprudent and outrageous discourses against that family; discourses, which are rarely repeated justly, are frequently exaggerated, and which, made in any manner, ought to have been pardoned by the covenant agreed

* Varchi Hist. book 12. Jov. Hist. book 29.

upon. There was no reason either to be cruel towards Pier Averardo Giachinotti, who, from the precise order given him by the government, had caused the two Corsi to be put to death, who were discovered holding secret negotiations with the enemy: nevertheless, his head was also taken off. Innumerable would have been the proscribed citizens, had the crimes, which were committed before the covenant had been agreed upon, been punished, but probably by the death of six of them, they wished to strike terror into the rest. The number, however, of the exiled, of those who were either sent to the confines, or shut up in the prisons of Pisa and Volterra, was immense. Among the latter, was Raphael Girolami, the last gonfaloniere, who was shut up in the tower of Volterra, and being afterwards brought to that of Pisa, was one morning found dead, either from ill usage he had received, or from poison. Forty-one young men of the Florentine militia, were also banished into various towns of Italy, and shortly afterwards one hundred of those who had taken part in the late government, followed them *.

While they were thus preparing the grand duchy or principality (principato) of Florence for Duke Alexander, and he was on his journey to take possession of the same, the Cardinal Hippolitus saw with sorrow that the riches and grandeur of the house of Medicis were about to be concentrated in his cousin. Hippolitus was senior in years; nature had endowed him both with mental and bodily advantages; his youthful beauty was adorned with the

* Varchi Hist. book 12. We know not how Giovio can dare to utter these words—“ Cæterum Pontifex quod suæ existimationis pie-tatisque fore existimabat tueri nomen quod sibi desumpserat, mode-rata utens ultiore, paucissimorum pœna contentus fuit:” but he was a great flatterer of the Medicis.

graces of the mind ; the study of letters was his de-
 light, and various of his elegant poems prove that
^{1531.} the muses denied him not their favour*. His
 court was the asylum of men who were celebrated in
 every kind of art and science ; music, too, was one of
 his principal passions, and he became a skilful player
 upon many instruments. The volubility of his tastes
 inclined him to the love of the military profession ; and
 many warriors were pensioned by him, among whom,
 from luxury, he chose to have strangers of all nations.
 No less than twenty languages were spoken in his
 palace ; and wherever he went he was accompanied by
 a numerous suite, both of Ethiopians, Numidians,
 Tartars, and Turks, the variety of whose dresses and
 physiognomies formed a singular medley†. Magnificent
 and liberal, he emulated rather the generosity displayed
 by Leo than the parsimony which influenced Clement.
 The lustre of these qualities threw a greater shade over
 Alexander, who possessed none of them.

Hippolitus, therefore, without charge of pride, might
 pretend to a preference to his cousin. He wished prob-
 ably to try the minds of the Florentines, and repaired to
 Florence before Alexander arrived. There are persons
 who assert, that the pontiff, to whom his departure was
 known, had warned the government of it. It is certain
 that, upon his arrival at Florence, Baccio Valori, who
 was sent by the pope, had a conference with the cardinal
 the day afterwards, and with the members of the go-
 vernment, when the cardinal appeared to have aban-
 doned his designs, and prosecuted his journey to Rome.
 Alexander Vitelli had arrived in Florence with four

* His translation of the Second Book of the *Aeneid* is printed.

† Jovii Elog. Cardin. Hipp. Varchi, book 15.

hundred infantry, and had taken upon him both the custody of the palace of the Medicis and that of the signiory, where already two very large arms were hung up, and clearly proved who was its master.

Alexander de Medicis now arrived, was received as the sovereign of the city, and ambassadors were sent to meet and compliment him. Anthony Muscettola, a Neapolitan, the minister of Charles V., had preceded him, carrying with him the decree of the emperor upon the fate of Florence. He presented it to the gonfaloniere and the signiors, and read it. Although the change of government, in the agreement made at Montici, was left at the will of Cæsar, the express clause was inserted, that, whatever it might be, the liberty of the republic was to be preserved: this decree, however, contained its abolition. The Florentines were charged therein with many crimes; and it was added that, after the obstinacy persevered in during a long siege, Cæsar might have destroyed that city as she had deserved,—but he, nevertheless, granted her his pardon. In order, however, to remove all parties who had agitated her so much in past times, he determined that the government should be fixed in the hands of one person alone, viz., Alexander, the duke, his son-in-law; and that this authority should be handed down to his children or nearest relations. Benedict Buondelmonte, gonfaloniere, who was an enemy of the popular government, was the first to get up, and declare he thanked Heaven that the thought had originated with Cæsar of giving the city this tranquil government, and placed his hand upon the paper of Muscettola in token of oath of allegiance. All the magistrates who were assembled, and many of the principal citizens, with countenances either joyful, sorrowful, or dissimu-

lated, according to the various parties* they embraced, did the same.

Scarcely had Duke Alexander arrived, when he went, with the greater part of the nobility, to visit the signiory, and considered himself as a private individual. After this ceremony, however, the signiory went in a body to his palace to return him the visit, or rather to present their homage to him as sovereign. In the mean time, a congress had been held in Rome between the pope and the citizens, who were well disposed to the family of the Medicis upon the form which should be given to the Florentine government; a form which rendered it easy for that family to preserve their authority, and it was resolved that an absolute government should be established. The citizens who were consulted were Benedict Buondelmonti, Robert Pucci, James Salviati, Bartholomew Lanfredini, the two cardinals, Ridolfi and Salviati, and among them we read with astonishment the name of Philip Strozzi, who afterwards so much distinguished himself against that government, and who is considered by many as one of the principal assertors of Florentine liberty. Some moderate objection was made by James Salviati, and he was, consequently, summoned no more to attend the meetings. The deliberations were immediately brought to Florence, and a beginning was made with the reformation. If any person still entertained a hope that the republic would have been preserved, he was soon undeceived. Hitherto the Medicis every time they had been restored to their country had respected, at least, the form of government; and the

* Jovii Hist. book 29. Varchi's Hist. book 12. Ammir. Hist. book 31.

usual magistrates remained to act. The power of that family consisted either in occupying all the principal offices, placing in them their adherents, or in confirming them with their own influence. Now, however, they began to abolish the magistrates who constituted the republic ; the standard-bearers, or *gonfalonieri* of companies, were suppressed ; all the citizens were ordered in the most rigorous manner to lay down their arms ; and, finally, the decisive step was resolved upon of abolishing both the *gonfaloniere* and the *signiory*.

This act was carried into effect by twelve citizens, chosen by the *gonfaloniere* Nobili, and his companions, and whose names it may not be improper to mention, as they were those who exercised this act of sovereignty in Florence for the last time : they were Francis Guicciardini, Francis Vettori, Julian Capponi, John Francis Ridolfi, Matthew Niccolini, Agostino Dini, Robert Acciajoli, James Gianfigliazzi, Matthew Strozzi, Pallas Rucellai, Bartholomew Valori, and Robert Pucci, to whom the *gonfaloniere* Nobili* was also added. These were so many little machines set in motion by the strings of those who held them in hand. To them was

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confined the usual authority, or power of reforming the state ; and the following is the result of it.

Considering that, in the old government, eight citizens were created every two months, who were called *signiors*, and that, consequently, forty-eight annually filled that office, in lieu of this two-monthly *signiory* they chose forty-eight citizens, who were to continue to discharge the functions for life. This first choice was composed of twelve *signiors*, of the *gonfaloniere*, and thirty-five other citizens.

* So Varchi says, book 12. Segni, however, book 5, makes some variety, saying that Francis Guicciardini, Francis Vettori, Robert Acciajoli, were not sent, but others in their stead.

They pretended that the old signiory was represented by this body; and the head thereof, instead of the gonfaloniere, was the Duke Alexander. The senators were reduced to mere counsellors of the same prince, since every three months four were drawn by lot, at the head of whom was alieutenant, and they were to judge of some causes which were particularly reserved for them. To these forty-eight senators other one hundred and fifty-two citizens were afterwards added, who, joining the first, formed a council called the Two Hundred, created only to poll for the offices. The distinction of greater and lesser trades or professions was abolished, as denominations which were become useless. The government thus constituted pretended to represent the old republican one; and represented it, indeed, like a picture, which is cancelled by age, wherein a few imperfect traces are scarcely to be recognised*. All the other places of the republic, either at first or afterwards, fell under the same control. It appears strange that Arezzo should trust to remaining a free republic from being flattered by the promises held out to her by the Prince of Orange, who was dead; ignorant that any promise, made for convenience in the midst of a war, is not usually maintained by armed powers, especially if the advantage of that power demands it not.

The emperor came again into Italy, and met the pope at Bologna, where Duke Alexander also went to meet him. Important matters were treated of; amongst which posterity, and particularly the Roman court of justice, have not approved the precipitate sentence of excommunication fulminated against Henry, King of England, which the pope determined upon in that city, and which

* Varchi Hist. book 12. Segni Hist. book 5. Ammir. Hist. book 31.

took place the following year at the request of the emperor, whose aunt Catharine had been repudiated by the king to substitute for her Ann Boleyn as his legitimate wife. This sentence irritated the king and the English nation to a degree, that they disclaimed for ever all obedience to the pope and the communion with Rome ; and thus that monarch, who had maintained with so much vigour the Roman authority, and had even entered into dispute with Luther, by writing a book of the sacraments, whereby he received from Leo X. the title of defender of the church, became its direst enemy.

An alliance was entered into between the powers of Italy and the emperor, upon whom all depended, and Anthony de Leva was created his general. A matrimony had been on the tapis between Catharine de Medicis and a prince of a house of France : whilst the pope was tarrying in Bologna with the emperor, two French cardinals came to him to treat of a matrimony of the same with the second son of King Francis. This could not please Cæsar ; but he probably considered the proposal a political finesse, in order to detach the pope from his interests, and no longer to carry it into execution, as he could not think that the King of France would marry his son, as it were, to a private noble lady : whence thinking to elude cunning by cunning, he advised the pope to adhere to it ; but was deceived*, as the matrimony was immediately concluded.

Catharine, who was still very young, before leaving Florence received the future spouse of Alexander, Margaret of Austria, who at ten years of age was going to Naples to remain until she arrived at a marriageable age. Great sights and showy amusements were given in

* Guicciard. Hist. book 20.

honour of these two children, who were about to leave Florence, and who were destined in time to play such important parts upon the theatre of Europe. The nuptials of Catharine were celebrated in Marseilles with royal pomp, the King, the Queen of France with all the court, and the pope, uncle of the bride, were present at it, and they were amused for more than a month with all kinds of festivities and diversions.

The pope now returned by sea to Rome, full of glory at having satisfied his principal passion, that of exalting the house, having made lord of a powerful state his nephew or son, to whom the emperor had not disdained to give his daughter in marriage, and having married his niece to the son of the King of France. In all these journeys, although in going to Marseilles he first traversed Tuscany, and embarked at Leghorn, and upon his return stopped a moment in that port, where the Duke Alexander went to visit him, he shunned the sight of Florence, as if he dreaded that the aspect of that republic now so changed, would tacitly reproach him with the loss of her liberty which had been effected through him, and he well knew he could not be received with joy*.

The Duke, in order to secure his power still more, began to build a fortress in the situation where the gate of Faenza stood, and Philip Strozzi, a very rich citizen, who was attached to the duke, lent him a round sum of money†, little thinking that he was building the prison, in which he was one day to lose his life. We have seen the character of Philip in its proper place, who although considered an impassioned lover of the liberty of his country, was rather so of his own interests, and of the

* Varchi Hist. book 4.

† Varchi, book 14.

favour of those who governed. Instead of firmly maintaining his opinions, he often changed his political maxims, so that it appeared that either interest, frivolity, or private animosity, excited him to actions which would have appeared dictated by the love of country, and that he has not justly earned the title he enjoyed from many, of being a martyr to liberty. Together with his wife Clarice he had been one of the principal and most active authors of expelling the two young Medicis from Florence; we find him afterwards one of the most interested counsellors in the congress of Clement VII, in persuading the adoption of the absolute government. It was not long, however, before he suffered disgusts from the duke, who only apparently respected him, but really loved him not, and who dreaded his power, which was founded upon riches, and the popularity of his children, particularly of the elder Piero, who was the favourite of the noble Florentine youth, and who being of a lofty mind, probably comported himself not with that servile obsequiousness towards the duke, whom he formerly considered his equal, if not his inferior.

While these causes of jealousy and disagreement were concealed from policy, an event took place which gave them full publicity. Among the daughters of Philip, was Louisa, married to Louis Capponi. She was very beautiful, and adorned with gentle manners, virtuous and honest, and the Duke Alexander appeared to look upon her with an impassioned eye. Julius Salviati, a very great friend of the duke, frequently made use of words and manners towards her at various festivals, which were not proper to be made use of to a virtuous noble lady, whether he acted for himself, or was only agent of the passion of the duke. Having boasted of this in the presence of Leo Strozzi, brother of Louisa,

after a few sharp words, Leo was silent, appearing to wait rather for facts than words. It was not long before Salviati, returning one evening home on horseback from the palace of the Medicis, was assailed by three persons, badly wounded in the head and thigh, and made lame. The duke was very sorry for the accident, and gave the most strict orders to proceed with rigour in search of the culprits. Suspicion fell upon the Strozzi and their friends; and Thomas Strozzi and Francis Pazzi being arrested, Piero presented himself to the magistracy of the eight, to prove the intrepidity which innocence is wont to encourage. He was retained, however, and frequently examined, but confessed nothing, as neither did the other two, nor could they find any proof of it, Piero having rather ridiculed his examiners; and they were finally liberated by order of Pope Clement, who caused a veil to be drawn over the affair. But the Strozzi, thinking they were not treated with that respect which they considered themselves entitled to, immediately departed for Rome*. The unfortunate Louisa Capponi, after supping in perfect health with her sister Ridolfi, was suddenly attacked by dreadful pains in the bowels, and died as was universally believed of poison, either ordered to be given her by the duke, who was irritated at her refusals, or from a cruel jealousy by the parents, in order to remove her from dishonour and persecutions†.

The pope survived not long his prosperous fortune. He died on the 25th of September, and thus was spared

* Varchi, book 14. Ammir. book 31.

† Varchi Hist. book 14. Signi, book 7. A black mark was found in the stomach, and a hole under it, and all physicians thought she had died of poison.

the displeasure of being a spectator of the misfortunes which attended Duke Alexander. This pope cannot be reckoned among the great men who distinguished the house of Medicis. He was alike exposed to great disgraces, and was favoured with the best success. He owed the former in great part to his weakness and instability of character, and to the want of political talents ; the latter, to the character of pontiff, on which account the repentant emperor chose to make him honourable compensation for all that his armies had made him suffer. No pope was ever raised to the papal chair with greater expectation than he was, since he was distinguished in affairs as cardinal above all others. Born to shine in the second sphere, he was obscured in the first, and the world would have considered him worthy of that sublime post, if he had never arrived at it. He was succeeded by Cardinal Farnese with the title of Paul III. He was the elder of the sacred college; was raised to that office when a young man by means not very laudable* : and had covered the stain by the lustre of his actions.

* He was created cardinal by Alexander VI., who had conceded that dignity, rather than to him, to his sister Giulia, the most beautiful woman of Rome.—Guicciard. book 20.

CHAPTER VI.

DEATH OF THE CARDINAL HIPPOLITUS.—CHARLES V. DECLARES THE FATE OF THE OUTLAWS, WHO RE-NOUNCE THEIR COUNTRY.—NUPTIALS BETWEEN THE DUKE ALEXANDER AND MARGARET, NATURAL DAUGHTER OF CHARLES V.—ARRIVAL OF CHARLES IN FLORENCE.—HIS MILITARY OPERATIONS OUT OF ITALY.—VISIT OF DUKE ALEXANDER TO CHARLES V., IN GENOA.—CHARACTER OF LORENZINO DE MEDICIS.—HIS FAMILIARITY WITH THE DUKE, WHOM HE KILLS BY TREACHERY.—COSMO DE MEDICIS ELECTED GRAND DUKE OF FLORENCE.—VIOLENT DEATH OF LORENZINO.

THE death of Clement was not attended with innovations in the government of Florence. The outlaws alone concentrated themselves continually in greater numbers in Rome, and together with Philip Strozzi, the Cardinals Salviati and Ridolfi, who were treated with little respect by the duke, frequented the court of the Cardinal de Medicis, who dissimulated neither the hatred he bore his cousin, nor despaired of depriving him of the state. Some atrocious actions are related to have been committed by the two cousins, who mutually attempted each other's life. These actions were invented, probably by malignity, and the belief of which was made easy by the manners of those times, which were familiarized with crime. The Cardinal Hippolitus was accused of having attempted to kill the duke in an unusual and cruel manner, and John Baptist Cibo, Bishop of Marseilles, is said to have been his accomplice. They conspired to throw the duke into the air, in a house belonging to the Pazzi, where the Mar-

chioness Cibo lodged with her sister, whom the duke was accustomed to visit frequently, and stay with till late at night, by means of the explosion of a box, which they intended to fill with powder, and upon which the duke usually sat. The Bishop of Marseilles, receiving hints that the conspiracy was discovered, retreated precipitately*. The poet Berni, who was frequently there to entertain the company with his amusing verses, was to meet with the same fate. He, however, if we are to believe testimony at all times doubtful, escaped not that poison, which he had been instigated by the duke to give the cardinal, which, having refused, proved what a crime it is, with certain great, to be participator of a secret danger†. This conspiracy, whether true, or invented by calumny, furnished a motive to the duke to have recourse to the pope against the cardinal, who, on that account, was exposed to meet with many unpleasant circumstances.

The emperor, in the mean time, sailed to the enterprise against Tunis. The outlawed Florentines ^{1535.} prepared to refer to him on his return to Naples; and, joining together, they chose to depute the Cardinal Hippolitus to go to him at Naples, or even at Tunis, and lay their common complaints against the duke before him. But, while these treaties were going on, the cardinal died. He was at Itri in the summer, and frequently went from thence to Fondi, to visit the beautiful and celebrated Duchess Julia Gonzaga, to whom, in spite of the coat of arms she had taken at the

* Jov. Hist. book 34. Varchi, book 14, relates the fact as certain. Segni, book 7, relates it doubtfully.

† Some think the matter was *vice versa*, viz., that the cardinal instigated Berni to poison the duke, but it is proved that Berni died after the cardinal.

death of her husband*, this young and handsome cardinal appears not to have been indifferent. His death took place, after a short illness, at the beginning of August, and Duke Alexander incurred the suspicion of having caused him to be poisoned†. It is more probable, however, that he died of one of those pernicious agues, which are so frequent in the summer, in that insalubrious air. Many Florentine outlaws, who were his companions, died at the same time, amongst whom was Dante da Castiglione, one of the most ferocious republicans, and each, according to the party he followed, was considered to have died of the same poison, or of the same fevers.

The emperor, arriving at Naples from the glorious expedition against Tunis, the principal Florentine out-

* Her husband was Vespasian Colonna. When he was dead, in order to show, that in spite of his age, she had not only loved him, but would love him always, she took for her coat of arms an amaranth, called by botanists flower of love, with the motto, *non moritura*. Whether this handsome young cardinal made her change her intention, we cannot mention with certainty: but the frequent visits he paid her, together with the testimony of some historians, induce a conjecture that he did. The fame of the beauty of Julia was so great, that Barbarossa made a descent upon Fondi, on purpose to take her, and present her to the great Soliman, but she had time to escape.—See Fontenelle, *Dial. des Morts. Hilarion. de Coste Vie des Dames Illustres*, tom. 2.

† Amm. Hist. book 31. Varchi, book 14, mentions even the person who gave him poison, viz., John Anthony of Borgo, at San Sepolcro, carver of the cardinal. Amongst the conjectures, the best founded would be that according to the public opinion of that crime, an opinion for which he was imprisoned, the duke received him into his house at Florence, but the reflection of Giovio, that the fever came upon him with intermitting cold shiverings, and that he knows of no poison which produces this effect, is very just, and appears to exclude every suspicion of poison. The cardinal died at twenty-four years of age.

laws and the duke himself hastened there, the former to accuse him, the latter to defend himself. The duke was summoned by the emperor; many of the principal citizens accompanied him, amongst the rest the historian Guicciardini, Lorenzo de Medicis, who afterwards became the assassin of the duke, and Cosimo, his successor. The outlaws enjoyed the favour of powerful persons around Cæsar, and particularly of the Marquis del Vasto and Ascanio Colonna. The latter thought it a charitable work to restore liberty to one of the most noble cities of Italy, rather than she should continue the slave of an obscure person, whose birth was not even known with certainty, and on whose account so many poor gentlemen were wanderers, and without a country. The Florentine cardinals and Philip Strozzi had conferences with Cæsar. Duke Alexander having arrived, the outlaws were requested to present him their complaints in writing. James Nardi had, before the arrival of the duke, explained them in an oration he held with Cæsar, an oration, which, being made by the feeble voice of James, who was already very old, in a language, too, with which Cæsar was not very familiar, was not, probably, well understood, and to whom Cæsar replied in general terms, that upon the arrival of the duke, justice should be done them*. Upon his arrival, the memorials against him, as well as the answers in his favour, were multiplied. The Florentines preferred bitter complaints against him of his cruelties and lusts, from which (they asserted) not even the sacred virgins were secure, making other accusations, many of which, even supposed true, were rather private errors than public crimes. The only accusation of the latter, for which no answer could

* Varchi Hist. book 14.

be given, was the want of honour, as it had been stipulated in the treaty of capitulation, that Florence should remain free, while liberty had been entirely destroyed; but this accusation must have been directed rather against the emperor, who decided it should be so, than against the duke.

While they were treating of these affairs, the Florentines presented a miserable spectacle in Naples, being partly the followers, partly the enemies, of the duke; and relatives even, meeting each other in the streets, saluted not, nay, threatened each other with violence, and picked quarrels. Although the favour of Cæsar inclined him towards the duke, nevertheless, the gold of Philip Strozzi, having gained over the courtiers, still kept the sentence so doubtful, that the duke, for a moment, despairing of success, resolved upon withdrawing himself, which Baccio Valori, his secret enemy and feigned confidant, advised him to, in order to ruin him; but he was detained by Francis Guicciardini*. The emperor finally pronounced the sentence in favour of the duke, who was thereby obliged to permit the return of the exiles to Florence, to restore them their estates, and forget every injury, inviting the latter, however, to declare whether they accepted the benefit offered them, and promised fidelity to the duke.

The outlaws, seeing themselves deluded, refused the advantages, and replied in writing, that they were not come there to ask Cæsar upon what conditions they were to serve the duke, or to ask pardon from the former, but that he should give them the liberty again, which his majesty had solemnly promised in the capitulation to preserve, and which his executors had violated; that,

* Segni Hist. book 7. Varchi Hist. book 14.

seeing themselves deluded in their hopes, they had only to expect that his majesty, better informed, would order their wishes to be granted them, as they were resolute either to live or to die free. This generous reply was applauded throughout all Italy*. After a short hesitation, Cæsar confirmed the sentence, and decisively fixed the nuptials of the duke with his daughter Margaret †.

The duke then departed for Florence, preceding the emperor, who, after staying a few days in Rome, came to the former city at the end of April, and was received with pompous magnificence. The whole road through which he passed was covered with triumphal arches, decorations, and inscriptions, allusive to his actions. At Florence he took up his abode in the Palace of the Medicis, the beauty and elegance of which astonished him; and, after a stay of seven days, departed. He stopped

1536. at the magnificent villa of Poggio a Caiano, and

was attended by the duke as far as the confines. He then took the road of Lucca, and passed into Lombardy by the Lunigiana. A few days afterwards, Margaret of Austria was brought to Florence on the 31st of May by the Vice-Queen Toledo, married by the duke, and a repetition of festivities, sights, and banquets, took place. She was hardly arrived at a marriageable age, being only thirteen years old, and it was her destiny to live only seven months with her consort ‡.

* Varchi Hist. book 14. † Varchi, ib.

‡ This illustrious princess was destined to have husbands of an unequal age to her own. She was hardly thirteen years of age when she was married to Alexander; becoming a widow, she was afterwards married to Octavian Farnese, who was not yet thirteen years old. The following epigram was, therefore written by Le Blois:

Impubes nupsi valido, nunc fortior annis
Exsucco et molli sum sociata viro.

Cæsar, at this time, who had sworn to effect the ruin of King Francis, began to make an attack upon France on every side with formidable forces. Having concerted measures with his sister, who governed the Low Countries, and with his brother, the King of the Romans, that they should take numerous troops into their pay, and attack France at the same time in two points, in Picardy and Champagne, he determined upon entering it by Provence, and besiege Marseilles against the opinion of his generals, who reminded him of the unhappy issue which had attended the same enterprise when attempted by Bourbon and Pescara. But Charles rarely thought he was in the wrong, and did not easily change his decision. He had the good fortune to find the road to France opened to him by the treachery practised by the Marquis of Saluzzo, who commanded a small army in Piedmont. The marquis, instead of retarding the march of the enemy in difficult passes, left the places without means of defence: and, had it not been for the valour displayed by Monspensat, who by obstinately defending Fossano, a place of little note, detained the enemy's army there for about a month, Cæsar would have employed only the time necessary for the march in order to enter France*.

The French impetuosity, at all times anxious for battle, was restrained by the prudence displayed by Montmorency, to whom the king had committed the defence. Knowing the great risk he ran in hazarding a

Ille fatigavit teneram lic ætate valentem
 Intactam totâ nocte jacere sinit.
 Cum possem nolui, nunc dum volo non licet uti:
 O Hymen, aut annos, aut mihi redde virum.

* Belloi Memoires.

battle, he chose to fight the enemy with a slow, but certain, warfare, by depriving him of the means of subsistence, in the country he was about to invade. Provence was left without any means of subsistence ; and the castles, or edifices of any kind, which could afford shelter to the enemy, were destroyed. The inhabitants were either shut up in the strong cities, or sent to the mountains ; and the country was every where laid waste. The army, having halted in an inaccessible plain near Avignon, at the confluence of the Rhone and the Durânce, left the enemy to scour the deserted country without any advantage, waiting with constancy for the slow, but certain, effects of his design.

The emperor in vain attacked Arles and Marseilles : in vain he approached the French camp ; its fortifications struck terror into the most courageous generals. Provisions were become scarce ; disease, the never-failing companion of bad food, weakened and considerably diminished the army ; and Charles, who had considered the conquest of France certain, was soon obliged to make a shameful retreat towards Lombardy, while his attempts upon Picardy and Champagne were not attended with better success*. Rarely has the pride of any conqueror been so greatly humbled. He appeared certain of the conquest of France, when, in a full consistory at Rome, he spoke with so much arrogance against Francis, and descended even to chivalric puerility in challenging him to single combat. His past enterprises, which had almost always been successful,—the late conquest he had made of Tunis,—had wholly inebriated him

* Robertson's History of Charles V., book 6. Guillaume de Bellay, Mem.

with the expectation of constant good fortune*. Humbled by these disgraces, he ventured not to shew himself to Italy, through which he had passed triumphant. He retired to Genoa, where he held himself ready to embark for Spain. After the death of Anthony of Leva, who died also from the epidemic, which had wasted the army, the Marquis del Vasto remained commander in Italy.

These successful events which attended King Francis were clouded by the death of the dauphin, who was supposed to have been poisoned by his cup-bearer Montecuculi upon the instigation of Anthony of Leva and Cæsar. Nothing could have been more ridiculous than this cruel suspicion. There could not have been a more foolish and useless crime, as Francis had two other children who were healthy and vigorous. Enmity, however, renders every thing probable. Montecuculi was, probably, put to torture; and, as his delicate constitution could not support the torments he endured, the confession which was wanted was extorted from him, and he met with a barbarous death†. The Spaniards, on the contrary, with equal falsehood, but more reason, attributed the supposed crime to Catharine de Medicis, the wife of the Duke of Orleans, whose road to the crown was cleared by the death of the dauphin; but, although the character she bore made her more capable of such a crime than that of Cæsar, she was too young and too new in that court to attempt it. The most impartial historians have attributed his death to a copious draught of cold

* In departing, he told the historian Giovio to make a good provision of paper and ink, because he would give him enough to do.—Brantome Discours sur Catharine de Medicis.

† Bellay, Memoire.

water taken by the dauphin after he had become very warm at the game of the ball, an accident which has sometimes occurred.

During these distant operations, Italy had not remained wholly tranquil. Count Rangone, by order of the King of France, assembled 10,000 men at the mirandola, to make a diversion in favour of the imperialists. This moment filled Duke Alexander with apprehension, who, knowing that Florentine outlaws were to be found among those troops, dreaded they would be turned against him. Troops were sent to the confines towards Lombardy, and the frontiers were placed in a good state of defence; but the dread was soon over, as these troops turned towards Piedmont and the Genovesato, and attempted in vain to surprise Genoa *. The duke, when he learnt the arrival of the emperor in Genoa, went to meet him, and remained there until his departure. Full of the finest hopes of fresh aggrandizement, he left his father-in-law, whom he was destined to see no more, and returned on the last day of November to Florence, where his fatal destiny awaited him. Although he neglected not the government and the exercise of justice, and a writer, partial to the house of Medicis, compares his opinions to those of Solomon†, he employed, however, the greater part of his time in amusements, masquerades, indecent amours, even after his matrimony.

This dissolute life he led furnished his assassin, Lorenzo de Medicis, with an opportunity of carrying his intended crime into execution. This man was descended from Lorenzo, brother of Cosmo, father of the country.

* Varchi Hist. book 14. Segni, book 7.

† Ammir. Hist. book 31.

He was the son of Pier Francis Medicis and of a daughter of Thomas Soderini, a clever woman, who, after the premature death of her husband, educated him with the greatest attention. He was called Lorenzino from his small stature, and the delicacy of his limbs. He was ready in acquiring a good education, but soon gave proofs of an extravagant disposition, a restless mind, full of vanity, rather than a lover of glory, held all in contempt, and despised both human as well as divine things. The Roman people, who possess a tradition of one of the extravagant excesses he committed, still point out in rage the fine little statues of the bas-reliefs of Trajan, which adorn the arch of Constantine, the heads of which were taken away more from the brutal barbarity of Lorenzo, than from any curious desire which actuated him to possess them.

Being expelled from Rome, he came to Florence, and began to pay his court to Duke Alexander, by lending himself to the meanest and most disgraceful offices, such as of mediator in his amours, and blushed not even to prostitute his relations to him*. He long kept this infamous post, became at last his most intimate confidant, and found an opportunity of assassinating him†. For a long time he seems to have meditated the atrocious design, which he had even communicated to the outlaws, and that the duke had been warned of it; but the cunning of Lorenzo, and the fear of being betrayed, prejudiced the duke, making him believe that he feigned only these tales in order better to spy upon the designs of the out-

* Varchi Hist. book 15.

† He had so greatly acquired the confidence of the duke, that the latter, when riding through the city, often carried Lorenzo behind him.

laws, which increased still more the duke's confidence in him*.

But although opportunities presented themselves to him every day to carry the attempt into execution, or he could find them whenever he chose, courage and strength failed him. The contest too was at least doubtful between the power of his diminutive body, and that of the great and robust duke; and it became necessary for him, therefore, to seek an accomplice. For this purpose he had associated with a certain Michael Tavolaccino, called by nickname Scoronconcolo, a villainous fellow, whom he had pardoned the pain of death, and who was, therefore, ready to undertake the commission of any crime for Lorenzo, as he had frequently declared, since Lorenzo had given him to understand that an enemy existed, against whom he wished to avail himself of his assistance. Michael answered that, in order to be revenged, he had only to name the enemy. The night before Epiphany†, the duke, after having past the whole day in masquerade and diversions, was preparing to go to bed, when Lorenzo, who was always with him, informed him that he had finally succeeded in persuading a beautiful noble lady who had hitherto rejected the attentions of the duke, to be complacent towards him, and if he would wait for her in his house, he would bring her to him. The duke, who never refused these invitations,

* Varchi Hist. books 14 and 15, relates that, being in Naples, and the duke shewing him a coat of mail which he was used to wear always, saying it did not give him any inconvenience on account of being so light, Lorenzo, having found it after some time, took it without being seen, and threw it into a well.

† There is great confusion amongst historians, some saying the night following the day of Epiphany; others, that which precedes it. See Varchi, Segni, Ammirato, Giovio.

went out with Lorenzo, and dismissed all his domestics.

1537. Lorenzo took him to his chamber, ungirted his sword, and took care to bind the sash well round it, to prevent its being easily unsheathed. The duke threw himself upon the bed, while Lorenzo, instead of going for the woman, went for his assassin Michael, whom he told, upon coming near the house, that the person was shut up in his room, whom he destined to death, and that it was necessary not to be disheartened, as he was a great friend of the duke. Michael replied that if it were the duke himself, he would not retire from the duty he had undertaken. Lorenzo then said ; You have guessed well : it is the duke. Well, then replied the other, let us go. Upon entering the chamber where the duke appeared sleeping, Lorenzo said, My lord, are you asleep ? and at the same time struck him a furious blow with the sword across the loins : The duke got up furiously, and defended himself with a stool ; Michael gave him a cut across the face, which took away a temple and a cheek, when Lorenzo, drawing near him, drove him back upon the bed, and standing upon him, put his hand into his mouth that he might not cry out. The duke kept the great finger of Lorenzo so firmly between his teeth, that the latter, almost fainting from pain, demanded assistance of his companion, who could not find any easy method of aiming a blow at him, without running the risk of wounding Lorenzo, who stood upon him. Laying down the sword after various useless attempts to strike a blow, he laid his hands upon a knife, and cut his throat*, and wrapped his body up in

* In this detail I have particularly followed Varchi (book 15) as better informed, who had caused the fact to be related by Lorenzo and Scoronconcolo.

the curtains*. Lorenzo took from Zeffi his maitre d' hotel, what money he had ready, related to him in confidence what had happened, and ordered him to make it known on the morning to some of the citizens, who were lovers of liberty: and demanding post-horses, which he easily obtained from his familiarity with the duke, he hastened to Bologna with a servant and accomplice in the assassination, where upon communicating the fact to Silvester Aldobrandini, one of the outlaws, he was hardly believed. He prosecuted his journey to Venice with all possible speed, where he gave the news of the duke's death to Philip Strozzi, who was very glad of it.

The action of Lorenzo was variously judged of according to various parties; and he received the title both of liberator of his country, and of traitor. Not only those who were interested in the government of Florence, but foreigners themselves were of various opinions. Among the latter the singularity of the poet Molza is worthy of remark, who, after having accused Lorenzo in a public oration, and condemned him to the public execration for having mutilated the statues of Rome, had afterwards not only the courage to praise this last action in verse, but connected it with the first, by saying that the man who had destroyed tyrants in marble could not suffer them to be alive†. Leaving out of consideration, whether the good of the country was interested therein,

* Segni says that Lorenzo left a note upon the head of the duke, whereon was written the verse of Virgil,

Vincit amor patriæ, laudumque immensa cupido.

† This is the epigram of Molza:

Invisum ferro Laurens dum peremit hostem,
Quod premeret patriæ libera colla suæ,
Tene hic ume, inquit, patias qui ferre tyrannos
Vix olim Romæ marmoreos potui?

A faint translation of it may be seen in Varchi, book 15.

whether the turbulent government, which had formerly agitated Florence, was better adapted to her than the authority of an individual, I think few persons will approve of the character of a man, who seeks with so much diligence to gain the friendship of a prince, in order to put him to death, who sustains this mask for so long a time, and who demeans himself by becoming the minister of his low pleasures, and lends himself to all kinds of humiliations, who participates confidentially in his daily amusements, and in the mean time secretly sharpens the dagger with which he intends to stab him. If too we direct our attention towards the end as tending to restore liberty, we shall see that with the exception of the execution of the crime, in which Lorenzo showed the cool meditation of a determined assassin, all the rest was inconsideration, for which the age of twenty-two years may plead excuse. The murder of a prince, who is odious to the people, without preparations having been made to introduce another system, changes not the government. The astonished people may rejoice at the event, but if minds are not prepared for it, and the means concerted for carrying another plan into execution, they remain in a certain irresolution, which only gives an active government time to confirm its power.

Such was the case at the death of Duke Alexander. Lorenzo had not taken the necessary measures, either before or after the blow, which came too unexpectedly upon the enemies of the absolute government and the outlaws; and while both were preparing to overturn it, the persons who had contributed so greatly to establish it, and who had the strength of the state in their hands, were enabled to re-establish it upon a firm footing. The following morning the duke was sought for in his rooms, and not being found, suspicions began to arise. All the

courtiers and ministers, however, were told that he was still asleep. But when they learnt that he had gone out at a late hour in company with Lorenzo alone, and that the latter had fled in the night, the misfortune, which had attended the duke, was considered certain. The Cardinal Cibo and Campana, secretary of the duke, had not the courage to visit the house of Lorenzo in the day-time, and cause his chamber to be opened from dread that upon his death being made public, the people would immediately rise. They sent, therefore, to all places where soldiers were stationed, to call them by forced marches to Florence, and particularly to Alexander Vitelli at Città di Castello.

In the mean time the chamber of the house of Lorenzo having been secretly opened in the evening, the body of the duke was found barbarously murdered, and was carried, under concealment, into the old vestry of St. Lorenzo. Zeffi had executed immediately the order left by his master, but no credit was given him by any one, as it was considered only as a piece of artifice practised by a man who was so great a dissimulator, in order to discover their real minds. On the Monday, the death of the duke was whispered through Florence, and various consultations were begun to be held upon the system to be pursued in a future government.

Vitelli now arrived with some soldiers, and somewhat inspired the faction of the Medicis with courage. Meetings of the citizens, who were lovers of the free government, had already taken place in the house of Alamanno Salviati. The principal were Alamanno de Pazzi, Pandolph Martelli, Philip Mannelli, Bartholomew Bonfini and others, but particularly Berkold Corsini, purveyor of the fortress, who kept the ammunition. Although he was a friend of Duke Alexander, as death

had dissolved every tie with him, he offered to maintain liberty, and give arms to the Florentine youth, which, if it had been done speedily, it is very probable would have thrown the city into confusion, and the absolute government would not have been easily re-established. Some of the persons in the meeting, however, said it was more proper first to try the minds of two of the principal citizens, Francis Vettori and Francis Guicciardini, upon obtaining whose consent and favour, their design would meet with much opposition. These two cunning men, who were accustomed to bear the sway in the monarchical government, perceived the danger they were in of returning to the ancient system, and openly praising their intention, they made them promise at present not to make any movement, and that they would regulate all in such a manner, that any alteration should be effected with tranquillity*.

The council of the forty-eight senators was in the mean time assembled. Many and various were the opinions; some demanding liberty, while others were instigated, probably, by the Cardinal Cibo, to insist that his natural son, Cibo, should be substituted for the deceased duke. This son was no more than five years old: hence the cardinal would have governed in his minority. It was finally proposed that Cosmo de Medicis should succeed Alexander, who, with the exclusion of Lorenzo the assassin, was the nearest relation, and upon whom, therefore, according to the declaration made by the emperor, the absolute government was to fall. This proposal found many favourers. Pallas Rucellai, however, who was a favourer of the free government, opposed it, and although he was repre-

* Varchi Hist. book 15. Segni Hist. book 8.

hended by Francis Guicciardini and others, was obstinate in his opinion, and the council was dissolved without coming to any decision.

The government in the mean time was strengthened by the arrival of fresh troops, and took courage to act with greater resolution. Cosmo, who was secretly called by his favourers, arrived at Florence. At the death of Alexander, he was at his villa of Trebbio in Mugello; and was received by all parties with pleasure. Although very young, he bore the reputation of goodness and prudence, and his appearance spoke in his favour. Having visited the cardinal, who, upon the first meeting, knew how dispositions were inclined towards him, he was received and embraced affectionately, and hope given him to aspire to the government: and, in fact, after some secret consultations, the forty-eight were again assembled in the house of the Medicis, where Cosmo had been called, but not introduced into the council, and was again proposed as prince. The man who ventured to dissent most boldly from this proposition, was the same Rucellai who was seconded, although coolly, by a few others. The greater number, however, favoured the election of Cosmo. The street and the court-yard were full of soldiers, and Alexander Vitelli was standing at the gate of the hall, tacitly shewing them what weight an armed force would have in their deliberations. A tumult was excited either by accident or purposely, in the court-yard, when Vitelli, embracing this opportunity, said that it was necessary for the council to be expeditious, because the soldiers were tired of waiting. Francis Guicciardini, and others of his party, went to speak with Cosmo, and conclude the conditions of the government. Upon an opinion being offered by Guicciardini, that his power should be

limited, Francis Vettori wisely replied, that by giving Cosmo guards, arms, fortresses, the title of Head, of Duke, or of Prince, such became useless, and that the minutiae with which he wished to limit his power, became ridiculous, because he would assume it himself*.

The conditions, nevertheless, were, that Cosmo should be called Signior, Lord, or Head, and not Duke, of Florence; that the public should pay him 12,000 florins in gold, annually: that eight citizens should be chosen for his counsellors, of whom Francis Guicciardini was to be the principal; and the others, Matthew Niccolini, Robert Acciajoli, Matthew Strozzi, Francis Vettori, Julian Capponi, James Gianfigliazzi, and Raphael Medicis †.

Cosmo, being then introduced into the council, addressed them with dignity and modesty, thanked the citizens for the confidence they had reposed in him, and protested that he would govern with their advice. He promised Cardinal Cibo to have every regard for his son and natural daughter, left by the duke Alexander, and to revenge his death. He faithfully maintained his promises; the more so, as his own security was interested in the latter, because it became necessary to terrify with the punishment of the murderer of the duke, whoever would have dared to do the same. A price of 7,000 florins in gold was laid upon his head, his palace was destroyed, and he was declared a rebel ‡.

Thus in three days after the death of the duke, the absolute government or principality of Florence was established firmly in the person of Duke Cosmo, and continued for about two centuries in his family. With such facility the most important affairs are sometimes

* Segni Hist. book 8. † Varchi Hist. book 15. Segni Hist. book 8.

‡ Varchi Hist. book 15.

concluded. The mind of the public, when in uncertainty, is easily turned by a little effort, to one party or the other*. It is certain, however, that if, while they were deliberating, either Bertold Corsini, with his companions, or any bold man of rank, had got up, and called upon the city to re-assert her ancient liberty, all the people would have followed him; because the vices of the deceased duke had made his government detested; and those same persons, who a few years before had supported a painful siege in the cause of liberty with so much obstinacy, were for the most part still alive, and were as fuel ready to burst forth at every little spark which was kindled. This spark, however, or the head adapted to that enterprise, was wanting; and the friends of liberty looked with pain upon the new chains which were forged for them. Many of those citizens who took so much care in establishing Cosmo, failed in their designs, and especially Francis Guicciardini, a man of so much knowledge, and so well versed in the most important political affairs, in the management of which he had been engaged for so many years. He, who was the principal actor in this negotiation of so much moment, probably hoped, that a young man like Cosmo, who evinced a placid disposition, and ordinary talents, would have confided in him in the government, by attending, as Duke Alexander had done, to the sports of the chase, fishing, and other similar diversions: but all were deceived.

Scarcely was this young man established in the government, when he began to give proofs of political talents which none would have supposed; proofs, too, of the greatest prudence and profound penetration, and displayed such activity in the management of affairs, that he became

* “Dum in dubio est animus, paullo momento *huc illuc impellitur.*”—TERENTIUS.

at once both prince and minister. Those who had flattered themselves with commanding him, were become passive agents, obliged to obey him; and seeing their dreams vanish, after a life tormented by remorse, became martyrs to their ambition, and died from disappointment*.

Lorenzo, however, above all the rest, failed in his designs; he sought glory, and found infamy. By his assassination he removed a weak, voluptuous prince, incapable of managing affairs, and easy, therefore, to fall; and saw substituted in his place a sage young man, gifted with all the arts necessary to establish his control over his native country, and link together more firmly her indissoluble chains: whilst he, marked with the name of traitor, and an hair-brained man, even by the very outlaws, with a price set upon his head, persecuted by numerous enemies, and by the emperor himself, was obliged to take shelter for safety, and hide himself for a time amongst the Turks; after which, returning to Venice, he lived continually amidst fears; and the cares taken to protect himself not availing, he was murdered in that city, after a wretched life of ten years, at the early age of about thirty-two.

* Segni Hist. book 9.

ESSAY IV.

STATE OF SCIENCE, LITERATURE AND ARTS, AT THE END OF THE FIFTEENTH AND BEGINNING OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURIES.

TUSCANY, and Florence more than any other part of it, maintained, in this second epoch, that pre-eminence in letters and in fine arts, which they had so long occupied in Europe. The history, during this period of the arts and literature of Tuscany, is closely connected with that of the house of Medicis, their great patron. Cosmo, father of his country, Piero, his son, Lorenzo, his nephew, and Leo X., his great-grandchild, present us with an uninterrupted succession of generous and intelligent Mecænases. It is necessary, however, to be just, and not give the former more praise than is due to them, because their other fellow-citizens are no less deserving of it. At the epoch when this, although a private, family, assumed the reins of government, past history has shewn us that an enthusiastic feeling for letters was already kindled, and generally prevalent among the Florentines. The Medicis lived in this happy period, and only added their stimulus to the sentiments which were already current. But, the sense with which they effected this, the generosity they displayed in furnishing learned men with the means of improvement in their career, the honours and distinctions they paid them in a succession of four generations, have established their reputation, and given to the age, which has been rendered illustrious by them, the name of Medicean*.

* The celebrated English author of the Life of Lorenzo the Magnificent, probably from an excessive attachment to the Medicean

It is true they had many rivals to contend with in this glorious contest. It was become the fashion in Italy, for princes to favour letters. The great number of the latter multiplied the number of patrons, whilst a spirit of emulation, and their own insignificance, made them aspire to this kind of glory, since they could not obtain it either by their power or their arms. They were, for the most part, men of genius. The state of agitation in which Italy found herself, the frequent vicissitudes which attended those small states, required princes and heads of republics to be men of capacity and talent. Nicholas V. is justly considered one of the

family, will have it, that literature, after the death of Boccaccio, began to languish; a languor, from which it was only revived by the house of Medicis. If he treats of the Tuscan language, he is quite in the right, as we have shewn in its place, but not of the other branches of literature, as is demonstrated by many facts. The time which passes from the death of Boccaccio to the establishment of the government of the house of Medicis, occupies about sixty years, since he died in the year 1375, and the return of Cosmo de Medicis from exile is in 1434. In this space various learned men lived and distinguished themselves, such as Coluccio Salutati of Pisa, who died in 1406; Leonardo Bruni, born in 1369, and who died in 1444; Poggio Bracciolini, born in the year 1380, and who died in 1459; Giannozzo Manetti, in the year 1396; and many others, if the foregoing were not sufficient. The university of Florence, revived after the middle of the fourteenth century, and where very learned men gave lectures, and among them Filelfo, who relates, with pleasure, that he had about four hundred scholars at his school, for the most part belonging to the first houses, and of senatorial order: the Greek language, which, after the ephemeral attempts made by Boccaccio, was permanently revived in Florence by Pallas Strozzi and Coluccio Salutati, who invited Crisolara there, about the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth centuries, and the many cultivators of it in Tuscany, the learned meetings held by Giannozzo Manetti, and by so many literati, in the convent of the Holy Ghost, (*Santo Spirito*,) and which give an idea or embryo of the first academy: all these facts clearly shew that literature had not decayed in Florence before Cosmo.

greatest pontiffs, and one of the most active in encouraging learning. Pisa justly boasts of him as her own. From an humble birth he arrived at the highest of ranks by his virtues and knowledge, rivalled, and probably surpassed, during his short reign of eight years, even Cosmo himself, in the beneficence he evinced towards the learned. Instead of the sad passion of augmenting his dominion, or of enriching his relations, which has so frequently stained the many successors to the chair of St. Peter, he employed all his diligence in reconciling princes, and rendering the city of Rome the seat of learning. Tuscany may be proud of him, because, if he was not a native, (which is not proved,) he derived that noble ambition for the most part from Florence, and from the house of Medicis*.

The house of Este is deservedly called a rival of the Medicean, in the favour she shewed towards learned men. Besides the many writers who have made this house celebrated, she has obtained the most flattering reward in two of the greatest poems, by means of which her immortal name will become familiar in the mouths of posterity, above those of the many powerful sovereigns, who are already immersed in oblivion. Alphonso, who owed the conquest of the kingdom of Naples to his valour, united a taste for letters with military heroism;

* Pisa maintains he was her citizen: (*Discor. sull' Istor. Letter. Pisana,*) that he was son of a Pisan physician, named Parentucelli, and of a mother of the house Calandrini of Sarzana, but was born in Pisa. See the documents quoted, drawn from the lives written by Vespasiano and by Giannozzo Manetti, &c. He was a poor clergyman, and lived the first years with Pallas Strozzi and Rinaldo Albizzi, instructing their children. Cosmo availed himself of him, to put the library of St. Mark's in order, where he transcribed codes and made notes. From such an humble beginning, his merit alone brought him to fill the papal chair.

and the rank of the learned, whom he assembled around him, the honour he did them, by listening to, and taking part in, their disputes, the decorations and munificence with which he loaded them, attracted to him the most celebrated. Nor can the veneration in which he held letters be evinced more visibly than by facts of history: the rebellious city of Sulmona was spared from fire and sword, for the memory of Ovid, by this king, who was more generous than Alexander, who, when in Thebes, spared only the house of Pindar*. His son, Ferdinand, educated under his eyes by Panormita, Valla, and Atilio, followed the footsteps of his father, and became also an author†.

The court of those sovereigns was thronged with learned men; and that family, in spite of the unfortunate vicissitudes which hurled them from the throne, imparted to the nation a fervour for letters, which has never been extinguished amidst succeeding revolutions. The bravest of warriors of that age, the founder of the glory and power of the house of Sforza in Milan, favoured literati, as his descendants did; and Lewis the Moor, the usurper, yielded therein to none of his contemporaries. The families which governed in Urbino and Mantua must be placed by the side of those we have mentioned, the princesses no less than the princes of which houses patronised *belles lettres*, and not rarely distinguished themselves therein. For the republic of Venice, too, it will be sufficient to mention among the many, Francis Barbaro, who was both a statesman and a most respectable man of letters. All the other princes, too, if they were not able to appreciate the value of

* Panormitæ de dictis et factis Regis Alph.

† There is a book of his of letters and orations.

knowledge, still paid it the greatest honours, and patronised it, in order to obey at least the empire of fashion. An enthusiasm like this, which had been kindled for some time, and always animated by the favour shewn it by princes, extended itself rapidly in all classes of persons, and a single city of Italy in this age could shew more men of letters than immense empires elsewhere.

We must, however, confess, that philosophy had no great share in the progress made in this, or in the past, epoch. The secrets of nature remained still buried in obscurity, and genius, always the slave of authority, continued obsequiously to accept words without meaning, in explanation of the former. The universities and the lyceums, which ought to have been the seats of reason and of philosophy, acquired a true fame from the study of languages, the various erudition taught therein, history, interpretation of the Greek and Latin classics, wherein the learned, by long and tedious labours, made a road, which was thorny to them, smooth and flowery to posterity. True it is that philosophy sat herself down in the chairs of those universities, with the greatest pretensions; but the oblivion to which posterity has condemned her empty speeches, becomes their real confutation.

The universities of Tuscany, like the rest of Italy, had suffered various vicissitudes. The Florentines, since the last epoch, had established their own with great magnificence. When they made the conquest of Pisa, the hatred they bore against this city, and an erroneous and cruel policy, persuaded them for some time to desert it, and it became impoverished *, and thus that university, so much neglected, fell into the greatest decay, although it was never

* Fabbr. *Vita Cosm.* Note 3.

wholly annihilated. That of Florence continued, in spite of various vicissitudes, to flourish: and, at the end of the fourteenth century, Gaurino and Aurispa occupied chairs in it. It was greatly revived in 1428 by the care particularly bestowed upon it by two men of note both in public affairs and letters, Pallas Strozzi and Gianotto Manetti*. Filelfo, who was summoned there, relates with complacency the honours he received, and gives a list of not less than four hundred scholars belonging to the first families of Florence who attended it. Christopher Landino, Marcialio Ficino, Charles Marsuppini, an Aretine, and Angelo Poliziano†, with many other illustrious names, afterwards proved the celebrity it enjoyed in Greek and Latin literature.

The Florentine government, however, was not long without perceiving how difficult it was to pay attention to studies in a city wholly devoted to commerce, voluptuous and fond of luxury; and, therefore, turned her attention to revive the almost extinct university of Pisa; and the republic, having under the government of Lorenzo de Medicis, which was so propitious to letters, adopted more just and wholesome principles of government towards that city, in the year 1470, five of the principal citizens were elected to revive and govern the university of Pisa: these were, Thomas Ridolfi, Donato Acciajoli, Andrew de Puccini, Alamanno Rinuccini, and Lorenzo de Medicis; 6,000 florins were fixed for its maintenance. A rector, chosen by the suffrage of the scholars, presided over it, among which scholars neither the Florentines nor the Pisans could have any vote, in order to entice the more with the air of impartiality. Its counsellors of various nations, German, Spanish, French,

* Mehus ad Vitam Ambros. Camaldol. Naldi Vita Jann. Manetti.

† Bandini, Specim. Literat. vol. 1, page 180.

Sardinian, Sicilian, bear testimony to the concourse of foreigners which attended it. Even the dress of the university, as luxury was proscribed, bespoke modesty and respect. The professors were obliged to be dressed always in the formal gown; the scholars in a kind of uniform of a given colour, appropriate to them. The cloth was of inferior quality, and of a low price; and even the greatest and wealthiest signor who was ascribed among the roll of scholars, was forbidden to put on a more noble cloth*.

These wise regulations attracted a great crowd of scholars to Pisa. The generous mind of Lorenzo de Medicis was far averse to the exercise of that tyranny with which the Florentines endeavoured to oppress, and almost ruin, Pisa. Under him, as infallible documents attest, we see her rise to new life†.

This celebrated university, thus revived, was, nevertheless, subject to various vicissitudes; its seat was changed at various times from fear of pestilence,—was transferred to Pistoia, Prato, and again re-established in Pisa. Upon the invasion of Charles VIII., and rebellion of the Pisans, (anno 1494,) the academical functions ceased

* *Etiamsi esset dux, marchio, princeps, baro, cardinalis vel episcopus teneat et debeat se induere de una Cappa et Gubbano: omnes de uno eodemque colore panni, &c.*—*Statuta studii Pisani et Flor. ann. 1479.*

† See the Letter of Antonio di Pazzi, mentioned by Monsig. Fabroni, *Hist. Univ. Pisanæ*, in which he mentions the high price of the houses in Pisa above that of those of Padua and Bologna, which proves the population to be very much increased. In a letter, moreover, of Jerome Frosini to Lorenzo de Medici, it is said: “*Pisana civitas, cuius hactenus disjectas domus, solumque relictum videre poteras, quum fere solo æquatam, et orbatam populo sordidum genus hominum dum taxat habitabat nunc ornata resertaque hominibus gravissimis reviviscit.*” loc. cit.

in that city, and were first transferred to Prato, afterwards to Florence. Fifteen years afterwards it was thought of removing the university again to Pisa, which did not take place till 1515, when Julius, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and Lorenzo, his nephew, governed the republic. A few years afterwards, its functions were interrupted by the discords of the Florentines, by the war carried on against them by the siege of Florence, and its fall under the dominion of Duke Alexander Medicis, who taking no great care of that university, it fell into the greatest decay. It was finally re-established with all its honours and magnificence by Cosmo I., (year 1543,) from which time it has continued without interruption or diminution of lustre to our days.

The university of Arezzo, which had displayed itself with great splendour in the past epoch, was continually declining; and, although it sometimes gave signs of fresh animation, particularly after its privileges were confirmed by Frederick III. (anno 1456) and some laurelled foreigners are found in it*, when the city fell afterwards under the dominion of the Florentines, the university was entirely abolished. That of Sienna flourished with great celebrity. This republic, a rival of the Florentine, gave herself every care to rival her also in letters; and the Abbé Aleotti mentions a long catalogue of the illustrious professors and scholars which honoured it exactly at this epoch†. When the extravagant disposition of Filelfo obliged him to abandon the university of Florence, he took refuge in that of Sienna, of which he speaks honourably.

The same studies were cultivated in these universities as in the past epoch. We have seen how rarely true phi-

* Guazz. Oper. tom. 2.

† Vol. 2.

losophy was to be found in them. All the barbarisms which disgraced science still remained in these schools, which were celebrated more for the clamorous disputes carried on in them, than the truth which avoided the noise of cavillous argumentations. Legal science was one of those which were most cultivated and treated with this method. The Pisan university frequently saw the professors descend like gladiators into the arena, and dispute, for the most part, in words strengthened by the arms of a light sophistry, sometimes drawing applause, sometimes the laughter, of the audience. Of some of these we will say a few words.

Tuscany possessed many celebrated lawyers: Anthony Minucci, of Prato Vecchio, may be considered as belonging both to the past and the present epoch; he distinguished himself in the council of Pisa (in the year 1409), and in that of Constance, where he was declared count and counsellor by the Emperor Sigismund. He was intrusted with the honourable charge of re-organizing the feudal laws; and among many other of his works, that which he wrote exactly for this purpose is the most esteemed, although it was exposed to great contradictions, whereby it met not with that public sanction from Sigismund, which was afterwards conceded to it by Frederick III.; a doctrine at that time important, but which the change of legislation, and the abolition of the feudal system and the feuds, has made almost forgotten in our times. He read lectures in various universities of Italy, and even in Florence, in the year 1431. He maintained the imperial rights in the council of Basle; and those of Alphonso, king of Arragon, against Eugene IV. Probably, he had good reasons,—(we wish not to discuss his motives, nor accuse him of frivolity,)—for changing his sentiments, and writing in favour of the pontifical

authority: From the council of Basle he proceeded to that of Florence, involved himself in the civil tempests which agitated that republic, and was one of the supporters of the party of Cosmo, father of the country. He died, full of years and glory, in the year 1464, in which we have an account of him as professor in Bologna*.

Arezzo was at this time singularly fruitful in celebrated lawyers. Angelo Gambiglioni is among the most renowned. Before taking the chair, he passed through a career of honours and legal offices in Perugia, Citta di Castello, in Rome, where he was lieutenant of the senator. When a questor in Norcia, he was accused of having badly administered justice, and being arrested, his life was in danger. This misfortune proved a luminous era in his life, because almost all the lawyers of Italy interfered in his favour. After the tempest had ceased, he devoted himself to the peaceable occupations of the bar and distinguished himself greatly in Bologna and Ferrara†.

The extravagant praises given at this time to the professors, the titles of monarchs of the wisdom of laws, &c., may excite the smile of moderns, who, by weighing their merit with the balance of reason and criticism, reduce it to its proper value. Those titles, however, represent, at least, the esteem in which they were held by the public, who, when not in a condition to measure with a certain exactitude what men are worth, exceed, for the most part, either in esteem or in contempt. There was no lawyer regarded at this time with so much veneration as Francis the Aretine, son of Michael Accolti and Margaret Roselli. A scholar of Menucci in law, of

* Maccione, *Observations upon Feudal Rights*.

† Mazzuchelli *Scritt. Ital. tom. 1.*

Filelfo in fine literature, he took the first chairs with the greatest applause. The decree of the Marquis Leonello D'Este, by which in 1450 he confirms him in the chair of Ferrara, is worthy of being quoted : "Many (he says) we have seen and heard who were and are great and excellent either in civil or canon law, in philosophy or in theology and humanity : few have we known, who were even tolerably versed in all those sciences at one time, none who was equally excellent in all, except Francis Accolti, &c*."

This eulogy in our days would be ridiculous, probably too it was at that time exaggerated : but the state in which sciences were in that age could permit it, since amidst an universal poverty we are rich with little treasure. All the literati of the age re-echoed the eulogy of the duke, what is even more wonderful for having put envy to silence ; as rarely happens when the distance between a great man and his contemporaries is so great, that they venture not to make war upon him. It is to be observed that amongst his encomiasts there is one of the most learned and elegant writers, Paul Cortese†, who calls him monarch of all sciences, lawyer, canonist, poet, musician, &c. We willingly repeat the eulogies of his contemporaries, because severe critics will not find in his works motive for so great praise, but it is with some men as with extempore poets, who are applauded with enthusiasm whilst living, and forgotten after death. There is sometimes a science, a literature of the moment : there is another of society, which makes a man shine in the midst of the companies of literati, by supplying an abundance of interesting knowledge, things said *à propos* given with

* Tirabos. Hist. of Ital. Literature, tom. 6. p. 2.

† De Homin. Doctis.

vivacity and eloquence, like a small coin ready for every occurrence, and which is easily spent, but which is not fitted to make a figure in a book where we look for much gold, either in larger coins or in bars.

Accolti was frequently transferred from the chair to political employments. He was secretary of the celebrated Duke Francis Sforza for about five years, who sent him to Rome to compliment the Pope Paul II. After the duke's death he staid at Sienna, and afterwards being summoned to Rome by Sixtus IV., he might have flattered himself with obtaining the hat; but soon flying from this restless and dangerous vortex of ambition, he returned to the chair upon the summons given him by the Florentines to the university of Pisa with the very bountiful stipend of 1,440 florins. Giving to this sum the value of money in that time, we shall see that rarely has science been paid so well, which, for the most part, is condemned to poverty. It is no longer doubted that he is the translator from the Greek of various works, and of the letters attributed to Falarides, of those believed to be of Diogenes Cinicus, &c.*

Anthony Roselli, another Aretine, probably his relation, was little inferior, if not equal to, Accolti. He united, according to the general opinion, the most profound learning with the most florid eloquence. He was called the greatest orator among the lawyers, and the greatest lawyer among the orators. The strength of his memory was beyond belief. No greater eulogy can be paid to his morality, if it is true, that he was never induced to defend a cause which appeared to him unjust. He employed himself more in public affairs than in the chair. He was called to Rome

* Pancir. Mazzuch. vol. 1. p. 2. See the catalogue of his works.

by Pope Martin V. as Defender of Ladislaus, King of Poland, in the celebrated dispute between this king and the Emperor Sigismund upon the duchy of Lithuania; a very rare example that powerful sovereigns have remitted their disputes to the rules of the Forum. Roselli gained the cause. He was afterwards sent to the Pontiff Eugene IV., by the same Sigismund, to settle the disputes which had arisen between them. He very much pleased the emperor, although he had been his adversary, settled affairs pending with the pope, and was honoured by Sigismund with the title of Count Palatine.

The same pontiff sent him to the King of France upon other important affairs, in which he succeeded admirably. He was honoured with the title of Counsellor of the King, and in the function by which he was created chevalier, Regnier, at that time Duke of Lorraine, and afterwards King of Naples, chose to give him the spurs and the sword. It is said that the purple had been promised him by the pope, and he appears to have deserved it as a reward for the many good offices he had done the pontiff. The pope refused upon a very weak pretext; the man who could dispense with impediments which were far greater, alleged that the canons forbade the cardinalship to whoever had had two wives. Roselli, irritated at this, wrote the book of *Monarchia*, destined to demonstrate a proposition, then very daring, but which is now useless, that the pope has no secular right over secular princes. He retired to Padua, where he became professor, and received the greatest honours. Of his legal knowledge we will only add that the treatise *De Legitimatione* had the honour of being read when the author was still alive*. He died with a report of disbelieving in

*Series of Portraits of illustrious Tuscans.

religion in 1466*, an accusation probably false, to which, his work against the pontifical power may have given rise in the minds of the superstitious.

CHURCH LAW.

SIENNA boasted of her Soccini. Mariano Soccino is celebrated by the respectable testimony of *Æneas Silvius Piccolomini* as being of a mild character, wise and prudent, and as one of the greatest canonists of his time. He adorned pontifical knowledge with *Belles Lettres*, and especially with poetry, having the three sister arts, and even medicine in its train†. Bartholomew, the son, surpassed his father in celebrity, and was regarded as one of the greatest lawyers. He was mentioned as one of the fiercest champions in academical disputes. He confronted in various universities, sometimes Maino, sometimes Decio, who were not less violent disputants. The language of Latium, strangely disfigured, was the vehicle through which they abused each other with their rude barbarisms. Academic custom required of the professors to make only brief disputationes with few arguments, but the anxiety they evinced for confounding their adversary made them go beyond the limits. The scholars took the part of the disputants; sad consequences might have ensued; and when the university of Pisa was transferred to Pistoia, John Guicciardini, rector thereof, displayed his wisdom in preventing a solemn challenge taking place, between Decio and Soccino. The latter, however, extravagant as he was, and so addicted to the vice of gambling as to pass whole days and nights therein, leaving

* Bertachini his scholar: tandem abiit non credens aliquid esse supra tecta domorum.

† *Æneæ Silv. de Dictis et Fac. Alphon.*

in the mean time the scholars without their lesson, appears to have known the manner of turning his talent, also to political affairs, which demand a certain phlegm and coolness. His fellow-citizens, the Siennese, availed themselves of his services in various embassies ; they sent him to Pope Alexander VI., to the Doge of Venice ; and he incurred the hatred of the Florentines for the opinion he declared to Charles VIII., that Pisa ought to remain free. He put on both the gown and the sword ; was a captain of the people, and treated many important affairs between the Florentines and the Siennese*. The importance in which his fellow-citizens held him is inferred also from the diligence they employed in endeavouring to liberate him from the prison in which he was shut up, when, upon a secret invitation given him to Padua, he chose against the solemn contract he had entered into, to fly from the university of Pisa ; since they sent Anthony Bichi to intercede for him. It is said that it was a capital crime ; whether or not, it deserved to be so. Be this as it may, Lorenzo the Magnificent governed the Florentine republic. A man of letters, therefore, as Soccino was, could easily be pardoned under such a government, and he was obliged only to give a large bail, which his fellow-citizens immediately offered for him†.

Florence was not without learned lawyers, particularly in pontifical law. Lorenzo Ridolfi was a canonist of great merit : he took the chair in Florence, but served his country more in public negotiations ; was employed in various embassies to the Count della Marche, who was created

* Alleg. Allegretti Cron. Sanesi.

† Tabb. Vita Lauren, vol. 2, page 78. Fasti Gimn. Patav. p. 2. Alleg. Allegretti Cron. San. Vita. Laur.

King of Naples, to the Venetians, &c. He was able in the management of affairs, and brought them almost always to a good issue. In his native country he filled the important post of one of the Council of Ten; was one of the officers who superintended the Florentine college, and few were alike capable of it.

The Cardinal Francis Soderini was a celebrated man in political affairs. He distinguished himself various times in the tumults excited in the Florentine republic, and in the vortex of ambition which agitated the Roman court. He and Peter, perpetual gonfaloniere, were the sons of that Thomas, who was left by Piero de Medicis tutor to his sons Lorenzo the Magnificent, and Julian. Francis completed his course of studies so early, that he became Professor of Canon Law in the university of Pisa in his twenty-third year, in association with Decio, and before he attained his twenty-fifth year he was created Bishop of Volterra, by Sixtus V. The Florentines sent him to that implacable pontiff after the conspiracy of the Pazzi. Alexander VI. made him cardinal. The remainder of his life was rather a perpetual course of ambition, than one of sciences and of letters. His love of innovation implicated him in the conspiracy framed by Petrucci against Leo X.; for which he suffered imprisonment and was fined a large sum: and under Pope Adrian, he was the unhappy rival of the Cardinal de Medicis.

It would be tedious and useless to enter into the merits of all the Tuscan lawyers of that age. We will, therefore, leave aside both Fabiano Benzi of Montepulciano, professor of law in Sienna, who was employed by the Holy See in various honourable offices, and Nello of San Gemignano, letting what we have already said suffice for an essay upon them.

MEDICINE.

MEDICINE continued still lost amidst Arabian reveries as in the past epoch in Italy as well as in the rest of Europe. Nicholas Leoniceno raised himself above the common crowd. He was, probably, a native of Vicenza *, and was learned in the Greek language. He had the courage so rare in those times, to think for himself in natural philosophy, and in medicine, to attack many errors of antiquity, and particularly those of Pliny. This was considered at that time a kind of crime: and he consequently found many champions against him in defence of the fables of Pliny. Among the latter, Poliziano must be reckoned, who was, however, his friend, and used a very becoming urbanity in his contests with him. Nicholas is one of the first writers of natural history, and one of the first who have described the Lues Venerea †. He was not without the graces of imagination, and made himself admired as an extempore poet ‡.

Proofs were not wanting of the great progress made in this age in surgery; a science so much more certain than medicine. The great celebrity acquired by Tagliacozzi in Bologna, in times not far from our own, by the art of restoring to a deformed countenance a large piece of lost nose, is well known. It would hardly, however, be believed in our days, if not attested by the veracity and respectability of ocular witnesses, who lived in that city §. The two Branca, Sicilians, father and son, are mentioned some time before, but in this age, for their

* Bibliot. degli Scritt. Vicen.

† This was discovered in the year 1494, and his book is printed in 1497.

‡ Lili Greg. Giraldi de Poetis nostri temp. Dial. 2.

§ Haller. Physiol. tom.

dexterity in the same operation *, and the Genoese historian, Bartholomew Senavega, has left us a document of a surgeon, who, in these times, cut for the stone by a method which is called the grand apparatus. It will appear probably, that instead of occupying our attention with celebrated Tuscans, we are wandering amongst foreigners. But amidst our own and the common poverty, it is of use, at least, to make mention of some small progress made in the salutary art in Italy. Many names, of which hardly the smallest trace remains, are quoted as celebrated at that time.

That it may not appear we are entirely without physicians in this age, who enjoyed the universal reputation of being learned, we will quote Ugo Benzi of Sienna, who was professor in various universities of Italy, a chair which he filled with very great credit. He was versed in the doctrines of Aristotle and Plato, and Æneas Silvius Piccolomini, a respectable testimony, calling him prince of the physicians of his age, gives an account of a dispute held by Ugo in Ferrara, at the time of the council, under Eugene IV., where many of the most learned Greeks being assembled, in the presence of the Marquis Nicholas, questions were proposed upon those points in which Aristotle and Plato were at variance. Ugo gave the Greeks the choice of supporting whatever party they pleased, ready, like Carneades to argue against them, and after many hours of dispute, he put all the Greeks to silence ; which, if it proves not much in favour of the truth and science, proves at least, the eloquence, the readiness of genius, and the importance of Benzi in the syllogistic art †.

* Bartolom. Fazii de Vir Illus.

† Descriz. dell' Europa d' Enea Silvio translated by Longiano. Mazz. Scritt. Ital. tom. 2. p. 2. Bartol. Faz. de Vir. Illus.

THEOLOGY.

THIS epoch boasted of many renowned theologians. Florence possessed John of Domenico, who, more properly speaking, belongs rather to the past century, but he figured also in this. Having entered the order of preachers, he made himself admired in the pulpit, and besides his theological and philosophical learning, was well versed in mathematics, no common merit in those times. He was created archbishop of Ragusi, and distinguished himself in the council of Constance, where he was sent by Gregory XII., to support his rights. This pope had sworn, in the schism which divided the church, not only to renounce the chair of St. Peter's, if the universal advantage demanded it, but to create no cardinals. He nevertheless created one in the Archbishop of Ragusi, who accepted the post, which, not being acknowledged by the others, stirred up a great clamour against him; and although he had hitherto passed for a man who united a very extensive fund of learning with a sanctity of life, such is the blind fury of parties, that he saw himself the object of the most cruel hatred, and the most bitter and indecent satires.

Among the latter, a letter deserves to be mentioned on account of its singularity, which was written in name of the Prince of Darkness *, decorated with all the titles worthy of such a sovereign. There is no kind of vice or of crime which the Prince of Darkness charges not the pope and the cardinal with. The latter, who ought

* This letter is not printed: there existed a manuscript in the library of Cardinal Passionei: Satan is called therein "Regnorum Acherontis Imperator, tenebrarum Rex, profundissimi Ditis Dux, superbiae Princeps, et omnium damnatorum æternus trucidator." The date corresponds to the title.—Mehus. Vita Ambr. Camald.

to have held the libel in contempt, had the weakness to dishonour the name of the archangel Gabriel, by putting the answer in his mouth. Following the fate of Gregory throughout all his vicissitudes, he went as his legate to the council of Constance. In this council Gregory solemnly renounced the popedom. John then leaving the order of the cardinals, laid down the insignia thereof in the midst of the assembly, and went and sat himself among the bishops. The fathers, pleased with his humiliation and obedience, made him re-assume the insignia, which he so well deserved. He crowned an agitated life with the preaching he undertook at the instance of the emperor Sigismund, upon the conversion of the Hussites. He died, in 1419, in Buda. His sepulchre was honoured by miracles, and he who, as one destined to hell, had been in correspondence with the devil, was now immediately admitted among the blessed. His works, sermons, and commentaries are very numerous, but they remain buried in the pacific dust of libraries, whence they will with difficulty emerge *.

The name of S. Anthony, Archbishop of Florence, is too well known for a Tuscan writer who is simply displaying the blossoms of the merits which adorn illustrious men, to employ himself long upon him. He was the son of Nicholas of Pierozzo, a Florentine notary and citizen. Sanctity of life and learning vied with each other in adorning him. He appeared with honour at the Florentine council. Eugene IV. obliged him to lay aside a part of his humility, and accept the archbishopric of Florence, in 1446. He was the first who gave the public an entire course of moral theology. His *Somma Teolo-*

* P. P. Quetif. et Echard Scrip. Ord. Predicat. vol. 1. Continuat. Rolland. vol. 2.

gica, are the works of greatest note*. Many other Tuscan theologians appeared with great lustre at the Florentine council, as John of Montenero, a dominican, a celebrated preacher; Bartholomew Lapacci, a Florentine, and Bishop of Corone, the blessed Albert of Sarano, &c.

The theologians of this and the last age, however learned, make use of a rude and uncultivated style. It is true that divine science, contented with the sublime truths she teaches, has taken no great care to load them with ornaments; but refinement and elegance are not inappropriate to any science, and even a venerable vestal, although she must avoid the indecent ornaments of the age, may, however, shew herself neat and clean; a sordid negligence adds nothing to her sanctity, and a rudeness of style, scholastic barbarisms, impart not greater evidence of gospel truths, but, on the contrary, are adapted to disgust delicate readers. A Tuscan, Paul Cortese, was the first who adorned the sacred sciences, and cleansed them from the peripatetic dirt. He was of San Gemignano, a family rendered illustrious by many learned men, such as the father and the brothers of Paul, and many of their descendants. He was born in Rome, where the example given him by so many cultivators of letters served him as a spur†. He was one of the judicious

* Abb. Aleotti Lett. Quetif, &c. Bartoli Life of S. Ant.

† A celebrated man, often neglected, and even persecuted, in his life, is afterwards reclaimed as a citizen by various places, who think to render themselves illustrious by him. We call Cortese a Tuscan, because such he calls himself in various places; because his estates and his castle called Cortesiano, were situated at S. Gemignano, and his family was established there for a long time. These appear to us excellent reasons, leaving aside the genealogies always uncertain, and frequently artificial. It may be, that in more ancient times, his family came from Lombardy to S. Gemignano: some say he took his origin from Pavia, others, from Modena. But if, in order

and elegant writers which adorned this epoch. He was of a studious disposition, and an imitator of the classics : was a friend of Poliziano, with whom he entered into friendly disputes upon style, and was a great venerator of Cicero. He was, therefore, wrongly accused of demanding that the manner and the phrases used by Tully should be rigorously followed, to the exclusion of every other, from which accusation he wisely defends himself*.

Such a man, nourished by the purest substance of the classics, we can easily suppose to have carried elegance and purity of style into theology when he undertook to treat of it. The four books of the Sentences form a compendium of theology, which, purged from the subtleties, from method and scholastic argumentations, offers an unusual and pleasing appearance, and the writer of the Tusculan and Academical Questions appears to have lent his philosophical style to the theologian. Various other works are of his pen : among them the *dialogue of the learned men of his time*, (*dialogo degli uomini dotti nel suo tempo*,) is very much esteemed ; a dialogue which, in imitation of his favourite Cicero, he imagines to have taken place with Alexander Farnese, afterwards Pope Paul III., and another interlocutor in the delicious Farnesian island of the lake of Bolsena. He wrote it at the age of twenty-five years, a period in which the fancy of young men rules over their intellect ; nor does it

to fix the native country of a great man, we abandon the rule to fix him at the place where his family has been long established and possesses estates of long continuance, every criterion is lost, and we must wander in the dark times of the Longobards or the Goths, and sometimes attach the genealogies to the Greek or Roman heroes, as that of the pious Paola of S. Jeronim is inferred from Agamemnon, the Santa Croce from Poplicola, and the Massimi from Fabius Maximus.

* Polit. Epist.

appear possible that at this age it can have acquired the maturity of criticism necessary to judge of the varieties of merit of learned men; and still, not knowing the years of the author, we should think it written at the age he hardly attained *. In the book of the cardinalship, which he did not complete from being interrupted by death, and which was finished by his brother Latanzio, he endeavoured to teach the duties of that sublime post; that is, the knowledge and acquirements, the piety, the religious virtues it demands.

In Rome, where he made his principal stay, many of the most learned men assembled around him in a kind of literary assembly, attracted to him frequently by his taste and the amiable qualities he displayed. In the three latter years of his life, having retired to the castle of Cortesiano, he was visited by the most respectable persons for their birth, the offices they held, and the learning they possessed. Among them were the Duke Hercules of Ferrara, the Duke of Urbino, Alexander Farnese, afterwards Paul III., the Cardinal Francis Soderini, who enjoyed the elegant society of a man, who, full of the most honourable attainments, knew how to clothe them with that familiar tone, and enounce them with that facility and perspicuity, which delight the more because they weary not the listeners. A handsome library and a printing-house were the solid ornaments of his Cortesiano, where he died very prematurely in the forty-fifth year of his age, in the year 1520. He was apostolic secretary; had he lived he would have been probably cardinal, and the man who, to universal learning added so much prudence, modesty, and reli-

* Such is the opinion of Poliziano, "Certe inest operi quædam super istius ætatis captum quasi maturitas."—Pol. Epist.

gious charity, and who had taught others the duties of that sublime post, deserved it above every other*.

MATHEMATICS.

MATHEMATICS, in the midst of the visions, the philosophical dreams, the barbarisms of any school, possess a character appropriate to them, which prevents them being infected with that contagion. They are a gold, which abhors all false alloy, and consequently, even in an age unfavourable to them, they either remain inactive, or, if ever they move, but slowly, every step they take is secure. This is an advantage which they owe to the infallibility of the method they pursue.

Among the mathematicians of this age, the first place is due to Friar Lucas Pacioli, of Borgo a S. Sepolcro, of the order of the Minors, although, according to chronological order, he should be named lower down. It appears it may be said without exaggeration, that he had no rival in his age. We have seen in the last epoch, that Tuscany was the first country which taught algebraic operations. The Pisan, Fibonacci, introduced this exotic plant to us from the Arabs. Friar Lucas afterwards cultivated it above every other, and rendered it fruitful. The first book of algebra known to Europe, is his work entitled, *Summa de Arithmetica et Geometria*, which is, in fact, written in a style little less than barbarian; partly in Latin, partly in Italian. We discover therein the visible progress made by the science, from the point where Leonard or the Arabs had arrived, since we find there the solution of those equations of all the degrees, called derived from the second. We cannot, however, assert with certainty, whether he is the inven-

* Vita di Paol. Cort. preluded to his Dialogues.

tor or the historian of this method*. But what proves the acuteness of the genius of Friar Lucas, is the solution of a problem of the fourth degree, with all its terms. Although this is a particular and very simple case, it shews that the author knew the fourth power of the binomium, and this is the first lamp of that method which has afterwards guided later analysts to the full solution of such equations. Friar Lucas was author of other works, but this is his only capital one.

Mathematics are the principal food of astronomy, which in this age, as well as in the last, was unfortunately associated with, nay, obliged to serve, the astrological tales then received with avidity by mankind, whose anxious minds love so much to read in futurity. Italy frequently beheld the severe speculatrix of the stars united with the spurious sister; but in the midst of those errors, gave the first impulse to the true astronomical systems, which, although known to the ancients, afterwards received a better form from Copernicus, from whom it took its name, and was brought to perfection by Galileo. Copernicus, in these times, studied in Italy, in the university of Bologna, under Dominico Maria Novara, of Ferrara†, an astronomer and astrologer of that city. After attending the lectures of this professor, he went to Rome, where he taught astronomy, and was much in request.

* We must confess that Friar Lucas does not appropriate to himself the method, but uses the words, "Ordinary rules are given for the solution," which might make it believed that the rules were known. To this doubt the authority of Cardano may give greater weight, who says, "Post multa vero temporum intervalla, tria capitula derivativa illis quæ Leonardus Pisanus reliquit, addita sunt incerto autore, quæ tamen cum principalibus a Luca Paciola posita sunt."

† Tirabos, History of the Italian Literature, tom. 6.

We have already seen, in the last epoch, how greatly Florence and Tuscany, even in the barbarous ages, were distinguished in astronomy and mathematics. This study was not interrupted in this epoch, which reckons astronomers and mathematicians of the highest reputation. We shall pass rapidly over them, as they have not made discoveries which advance the science, and shall only mention some of them, who bear testimony that a study, began so many ages back, in this country, fully maintained itself.

William Becchi, Bishop of Fiesole, an Augustin, whose observations upon a comet are preserved in the Magliabecchian library, dedicated to Piero di Cosmo de Medicis, in the year 1456; Goro di Saggio Dati, or his brother, Friar Leonard, a Dominican*, who distinguished himself by a work, which so many ages before him formed the glory of Manilio, and after him of Pontano, were illustrious almost at the same time, both in astronomy and mathematics. These two wrote the celestial movements in heroic verses. Our Goro has written an heroic astronomical poem in octave rhyme†. Francis Berlinghieri, a Florentine, made the language of the muses also the vehicle of geographical and astronomical knowledge, and wrote six geographical books in third and in octavan rhyme, upon the islands discovered by Columbus. However little such themes are adapted to the poetic style, the number and the measure, in which the observations are confined, may serve to assist the memory of the reader‡.

* Manni thinks Goro did nothing more than copy the work of his brother.—Preface to the Translation of the Fables of Æsop.

† *De Sphæra Mundi*; printed in Florence, 1482, &c.

‡ *Geograf. in terza rima Toscana, colle sue tav. &c.*—Zimen. loc. cit.

Arezzo boasted of her Messer Pietro, who made his knowledge of the stars subservient to astrology, and became professor thereof in the college of Florence. Many Siennese are mentioned, such as John Marliano and Lucchino ; but Julius Bellarti acquired greater celebrity. The crooked arguments by which he endeavours to sustain so vain an art, are adorned with elegant observations and ingenious reasonings upon the irregularity of the solar and lunar movements. We may lament that his learning has been badly employed ; he is like an excellent embroiderer, who has the misfortune to work upon a ragged and common cloth, which in a short time unthreads and destroys itself. He lived a long time in Florence an exile from his native country, persecuted by a hostile faction, uncertain of his fate, considering himself like a Damocles, who had a sword hanging over his head ; and, like the astrologer of *Æsop*, he, who saw the fate of others, and pretended to have predicted the end of Savonarola, saw not his own, which was present to him. He pretended to confute the work of Pico della Mirandola against astrology ; and pretends that, if Pico had been alive, after a more mature reflection, he would not have published that work*.

S. Miniato presents us in Lorenzo Buonincontri with a man who was celebrated for the various objects upon which his lively genius knew well to employ itself. He was an astronomer, poet, and historian, a lover of his native place, which, when subjugated by the Florentines, he had recourse to the emperor Sigismund to set at liberty, and received both assistance and hopes. Lorenzo, in the wandering life which so many unhappy

* Zimenes loc. cit. Tirabos. Hist. of the Italian Literature, tom. 6. page 1.

exiles from their native country led in those times of war and revolution, took up arms, and bore them under the illustrious Francis Sforza. He went to Naples, and was well received and favoured by King Alphonso, protector of the learned. He there expounded the astronomy of Manilius, a poet of the golden age ; but the difficulty of the language, enveloped amidst astrological reveries, rendered the interpretation of it very difficult, particularly at that time*, which added lustre to the merit of the interpreter. After fifty-three years of exile, he was enabled to return to his country, and explained the same poet in Florence: he was author of various works. If the poem in three books upon natural and divine things, wherein astrology, geography, and theology, are interwoven curiously together, may be disagreeable to us on account of the matter, the style in which it is given is not so ; and the pomp with which, in imitation of Ovid, he has described the christian festivals, prove him to be no contemptible poet. Probably, such a master inspired Pontano, his scholar, with the idea of his fine poem, since he had great veneration for him. He addressed verses to him, and deplored his death in an epigram†. Lorenzo owed

* Manilius announces at the first verse of the poem his credulity of astrology.

. et conscientia fati
Sydera.

We meet sometimes in this obscure poem with sublime pieces or singular opinions. Modern natural philosophers, who maintain the transformation of water into air, are pleased to find this sentiment in the astronomy of Manilius in these two verses :

Ut liquor exalta tenuis atque evomat auras

Oraque ex ipso ducentem semina pascat.—*Book 1.*

† Pontano, in his poem of celestial things, was the first who renewed the old opinion, that the light of the milky way arises from innumerable stars, invisible to the naked eye.

to astrology the celebrity he enjoyed in his time. Of the many merits which adorned him, that of the historian alone remains, since it has been said that history, written in any manner, delights, or, to speak with more precision, interests, posterity, when it is a work in great part of a cotemporary. Of his works, therefore, the Annals of his Country, and the History of the Kings of Naples, are only sometimes consulted*.

Amid the foolish astrological visions, however, astrologers were not wanting, who suffered themselves not to be contaminated by such stories. Such was the Florentine, Paul Toscanelli, who has left an illustrious document of himself in the construction of the great gnomon of the sun-dial of S. Maria del Fiore. He was born in 1397, and cultivated Greek and Latin literature, but particularly medicine and natural philosophy. Brunelleschi made him take a liking to mathematics, and became his first master. These acquirements led him to penetrate into the secrets of astronomy, and to cultivate geography, which he studied very diligently.

The recollection of the old sun-dial of St. John's, neglected and disfigured, probably gave the first rise to the idea of Paul, to construct one in the great cupola of S. Maria del Fiore, which had been recently erected by his friend and master. The extraordinary height of the point where the solar image is taken, which falls upon the pavement, and marks the summer solstice, renders the observations of it more delicate and important, and the length of time through which they may be continued gives a perfection to it. The height is such that, putting together those of the three most celebrated gnomons which were constructed afterwards, viz., of

* Murat. Rer. Ital. Scrip. Lami Delic. Erud. tom. 5, 6, 8.

S. Petronius, in Bologna ; of S. Maria degli Angeli, in Rome ; and of S. Sulpice, at Paris, the summit is less than that of Florence ; and there would be space, says its historian*, for another ample gnomon. It is well known of what importance it is to fix the solstitial points. This temple became an oracle for Paul, which he could securely consult, and therefore correct the Alphonsan tables, by shewing that the equinoctial points could be accelerated. He has, indeed, not left us his observations ; but many writers, and particularly Pico della Mirandola, took care to note them†.

It appears that in the course of a long life, which exceeded eighty years, Paul, when living in literary ease, was more fond of philosophical tranquillity than of making his name resound ; and therefore he has left no written documents of the vast knowledge he possessed. He sought, however, in vain to hide himself in domestic obscurity. The fame of his knowledge and astronomical acquirements made him consulted by the most remote countries : and he has the merit of having contributed to the discovery of the new world, by spurring on Columbus to that daring enterprise.

Portugal, governed by wise and active kings, had, for some time, thought of opening a passage to the East Indies, by turning around Africa ; and various new coasts had been discovered. The King of Portugal had interrogated Toscanelli before Columbus, through Ferdinand Martinez, Canon of Lisbon, upon the method to be observed in this passage. Toscanelli, in a letter, explained to him his opinion ; viz., that instead of coasting Africa,

* Ximenes, loc. cit.

† Joann. Picus in Astr. Ximenes, loc. cit.

he should turn his prow to the West, and by persisting in the right course, he would find the oriental lands, and the Spice Islands*. He added a geographical map to the letter, whereon the voyage and the distances were marked. This letter was written from Florence, dated June 1474, about twenty years before the discovery made by Columbus, who exactly kept this road. Paul, when interrogated by Columbus about the same time upon the same subject, thought he could not give him a better reply, than by sending a copy of the letter written shortly before, together with the naval map. I would

* These letters to Martinez and to Columbus are quoted by Ximenes in his *Gnomon*, &c., with learned notes. This learned man, however, has taken a singular equivoque, deceived by an expression of Paul, which is not very exact: he says in his letter to Martinez “Although I have often reasoned upon the very short road which is from hence to the Indies, where spices grow, by the way of sea, which I consider *shorter than that you make through Guinea*,” &c. These expressions have made Ximenes believe that the Portuguese really since 1474 were acquainted with a road to the East Indies, and practised it. He does not think it was by land, by traversing Africa, and going to the Red Sea, as he finds too many difficulties in it. He remains in doubt upon the road. He thinks it, however, known to the Portuguese, and kept concealed from every other with a secret jealousy; but it is easy to see it must have been either by land, or by sailing round Africa, going towards America, and passing the straits of Magella or doubling Cape Horn! The first is not possible by concession of the author: much less the other two, since they would have already found what they were seeking. By the Cape of Good Hope, Vasco di Gama is the first, by universal testimony, who arrived there, by the other two they would have discovered and past America. And, again, did not the Portuguese, like all other nations, purchase spices from the Venetians? But how are we to understand the words of Toscanelli? The voyage you are making means that you are making it through Guinea to find that road. Understanding them thus, all the difficulties, which would be otherwise insurmountable, vanish.

not venture to declare that Toscanelli was the first to form the design ; but it is certain that his authority was a great spur to the courageous discoverer, as is inferred from the testimony of the son of Columbus*.

The end of the fifteenth century was signalized by this memorable event. The minds of mankind lately escaped from barbarism, were agitated by the restless love of novelty, and having regained the use of thinking for themselves, the colossus of authorities was tumbling on every side. Credit was no longer given so easily to ancient stories, and the uninhabitable torrid zone, or the insuperable walls of the terrestrial pile were narrations listened to only with ridicule. Not only Columbus achieved the most daring enterprise that has ever been attempted by the discovery of America, but in a few years, and before the close of the century, discoveries were multiplied on every side.

By the side of Columbus we may place our Florentine Amerigo Vespucci, who has given the name to the continent, and who, as has been supported by the Tuscans particularly, after Columbus had made the first great step, and discovered the Antilles, was the first to land upon the continent ; but great writers contend with Amerigo in the discovery, and attribute it to Columbus. The time is past for renewing a dispute which has so much animated the learned. All the documents necessary for this kind of trial have been adduced ; there is

* In the life of his father he speaks thus " One Master Paul, natural philosopher of Master Domenico, Florentine cotemporary of the same Ammiraglio, was the cause; in great part, that he undertook that journey with more courage, and immediately by the means of one Lorenzo Girardi, a Florentine who was in Lisbon, wrote upon it to the said Master Paul, and sent him a small sphere, discovering his intention, to which Master Paul sent an answer in Latin."

nothing to be added, and the reader may see them whenever he may be pleased to do so, and judge for himself*. We cannot, however, avoid making one unpleasant reflection, viz., that almost all illustrious foreigners and even Italians have given this dispute against us. Even the other voyages of Vespucci have been the subject of dispute. The first of 1497 is said to be fictitious ; of the second in 1499, which his opponents call the first, they insist that not he, but Oieda, was the head of the expedition. In the 3rd voyage of 1501, undertaken by commission of the King of Portugal, he says he discovered the Brasils ; even this is contradicted by Spanish and Portuguese writers, the latter of whom maintain that the discovery is to be attributed to Peter Alvarez de Cabral. That he, however, made this voyage, whether he was the discoverer of that place or not, is proved by the respectable testimony of Peter Martire d' Angleria. The fourth possesses nothing singular but the name given to the Bay of All Saints. His nautical skill, however, in the midst of so many disputes, is universally acknowledged. He died in the year 1516 : his body is buried in the Island of Terzera, a tomb worthy of so celebrated a navigator.

If, however, so many doubts and contentions arise upon the navigation of Vespucci, there is none upon the important discovery of new France made by the Florentine John of Verrazzano in 1524, whereby King Francis I., in spite of the pontifical division, came into a share of the new world. Four ships were destined to the expedition, but the tempest dispersed them, and other

* They are almost innumerable ; but Robertson's History of America, with Tiraboschi's, History of Italian Literature, Cinovai, Eulogy of Vespucci, Napione upon Columbus may be consulted.

obstacles reduced him to attempt it with a single ship, the Dauphin, and with only fifty men aboard. Upon his return to Dieppe in Normandy, he addressed a judicious and detailed narration of the voyage he had made to the king. From another manuscript, which is preserved in Florence, we infer that it was his intention to find a passage to the East Indies by that road: little more is known of him. There are persons who say he met with an untimely and unfortunate end by the hands of the savages in another voyage, and thus had a fate similar to two illustrious navigators, Magellan and Cooke; however, Tiraboschi may think, he was in Florence in 1537*.

In looking back to the history of these great discoveries, one reflection presents itself to us, which shows us the whimsical game played by fortune. Columbus, Amerigo, Verrazzano, Cabotto and others, have placed the Kings of Spain, Portugal, France, and England in possession of vast islands and continents: The principal discoverers of those countries are Italians, and still no Italian power possesses an inch of ground upon them.

Historians, in laying before the reader the splendid variety of talent, which has enriched the literary world with so many, and such different, productions of genius and imagination, have, by way of giving them an order, and assisting the memory, imitated botanists by dividing them in classes; but as some plants, by their multifarious qualities, embarrass botanists, and make them uncertain in what class to place them, so it frequently happens with celebrated litterati. The Florentine Leon

* It is uncertain, however, from the passage of Hannibal Caro there quoted, whether it was John or his brother. Tiraboschi, Hist. of Ital. Liter. tom. 6. p. 263.

Baptist Alberti is one of these. He was a mathematician, a moral philosopher, a poet, a critic, an historian, a moralist, an architect, a sculptor, and a painter. A mathematician, favoured by the muses, or a poet who has penetrated into the secrets of nature, is not rare; but for the most part, either the one secondary quality or the other, is only a light embroidery upon the principal stuff. Alberti, however, forming one of those rare exceptions which nature appears to make to display her power, was profound in every art or science which he undertook to cultivate. A general of Cyrus, who was led astray by his passion, said, by way of excuse before his prince, that he thought he had two souls in his body, the one which obeyed the dictates of virtue, the other of vice*. The same may be said of some great men whose genius would appear impossible of being capable of comprehending such variety of science.

The melancholy vicissitudes which attended the Alberti family are well known in the Florentine history. Benedict was the companion of Silvester de Medicis in destroying the tyranny exercised by the captains of the faction, through which, in the rebellion of the Ciompi, so many disorders happened to his native country. When this rebellion was quelled, Benedict remained one of the heads of the government, and distinguished himself by his moral virtues, and particularly by the moderation and justice with which he opposed the violent measures resorted to by his companions; but moderation is not the virtue of factions. This became his ruin, and he chose rather to go into voluntary exile, than remain in his country, again exciting the people to rise, which would have been easy for him to effect. His party being ruined, almost all

* Xenophon, Cyrop.

the Alberti family were exiled at various times. Among them was the Father of Leo, who met with the misfortune, common to Petrarch and so many other illustrious Florentines, to be born in exile. Neither the time nor the place of his birth are well certified, although the greater probability is that he was born either in Venice or in Genoa in the year 1404*.

His father Lorenzo took very great care of his education. In gentlemanly exercises (if these trifling ornaments deserve to be mentioned in a man of so much science,) he had no equal; besides the genteel accomplishments of singing and dancing, the strength and dexterity he displayed in wrestling, in throwing arrows, in leaping, was truly surprising. Being intended for the ecclesiastical state, he studied in Bologna canon law, and became a priest. He held a parish, and was a Florentine canon at the age of twenty years: he wrote in Latin with so much elegance that he deceived the literary public, who was so good a judge of Latin in that age. He wrote a comedy which he called *Philodoxos*, and imitated the style used by the ancient comic writers so well, that upon its being made known to his friends, and upon his being asked where he had got it, (as from his youthful age no one believed him the author of it,) he replied, he had taken it from ancient codes, and it was considered, for about ten years, as a precious relique of antiquity. Some time afterwards Alberti revised it, corrected some errors made particularly by copyists, greatly improved it, and published it as his own. He then became very much astonished at observing the coolness with which it was received by the same persons, who thinking it ancient, had greatly extolled it.

* Pozzetti Eulogy of Alberti Tirabo. tom. 6.

It is a common failing of all ages to look with an eye of veneration upon the remains of antiquity, however mediocre, and to prefer them to modern objects. Horace and Tacitus complain of this with reason*, and if ever the celebrated verses of Ossian should be discovered (as it has been very much doubted) to be the work of a modern, they would lose a great part of those merits, which the imagination of mankind is continually heaping upon them, in proportion as the works are hidden amidst the clouds of antiquity.

At the age of twenty-four years, it is said that a disease weakened the memory of Alberti to such a degree that he could no longer recollect the names of his friends. This, however, did not at all alter the strength of his intellect. A disease, which takes away the memory without weakening the genius, is very singular, and proves still more the difficulty of comprehending the mysterious mechanism, which renders the corporeal organs subservient to the intellectual faculties. It is true that nature is frequently prodigal of a great memory to the loss of genius, and that men are to be found, in whose minds an immense fund of knowledge is amassed, written, as it were, in an inanimated library, without the power of combining it.

In Alberti, if we are to judge from his works, which are so full of choice erudition, it appears that the misfortune attendant upon the loss of his memory was only

* *Sed tuus hic populus*
..... nisi quæ terris remota suisque
Temporibus disjuncta vidit fastidit et odit :
Sic fautor veterum ut tabulas, peccare vetantes
Quas his quinque viri sauxerunt : fœdera regum
Pontificum libros, annosa volumina vatum
Dictit Albano Musas in Monta locutas.—Hor. epis. lib. 2. epis. 1.
Vetera extollimus recentium incuriosi—Tac. ann. lib. 2.

transient : a fine imagination, guided at all times by reason, opened to him the fountains of the beautiful ; and the muses, the fine arts, and severe wisdom vied with each other in adorning his works. It is not the object of our work to run through and analyze the whole of them, since the portraits we offer are only in miniature. We will, however, touch upon them.

The first production he offered immediately announced the talent Alberti possessed, viz., the genius and the fancy which, as it were, embrace each other, and lend each other the hand in adorning truth. Philodossio is not a common drama: the design is to spur on men to the acquisition of glory ; the personages are all allegorical. Philodossio is a lover of Doxa, viz., Glory: Phemia, or Fame, is the sister of the latter: both are feigned to be Roman matrons, because in Rome they held their seat. Philodossio and his friend Phroneus are Athenians, and the parents of the former are Argos and Minerva, or Providence and Industry. The inconstant and faithless Tichia is Fortune, and her son the bold and vain Thrasion; Chronos is Time, the father of Aletheia or Truth. The thread of the fable is woven among these and other imaginary personages, and the events are adapted to the characters they fill. Many other of his works, either moral or political, bear the same stamp, that is, the moral truths are clothed in imagery. Thus the most common ideas assume an air of novelty, are more easily stamped in the mind and heart, and are more acceptable to the reader, because he must develope them of himself, and guess at their meaning.

His Momus is clothed in the same allegorical veil. This is a spirited Latin romance written in dialogue, wherein useful information is imparted to a prince. He is concealed under the figure of Jupiter; Momus, the

god of slander, throws both gods and men into confusion, and hence the events, detailed in the romance, take their origin. The Virtues and Vices, painted with their attributes, enter into disputes, and endeavour to pain the mind of Jove. Many spirited traits in this work would do honour to Lucian and to Fontenelle. The sensible judgment displayed by Charon, with which he derides the vain sayings of the philosophers, who, in pointed and elegant discourses, pretend to explain natural phenomena, and sell obscure words for facts, is admirable. This is no unfrequent vice in all times, but was a very common one at that time, and it was found even necessary to respect it; the wisdom of Alberti, therefore, in discovering the light amid so many blind persons, is even more admirable*.

This talent is displayed also, and even more visibly, in the hundred apolagues, some of which are of a noble and spirited invention. To the great misfortune of literature, his *Intercaenales*, which contained (as it is known to all who have read them) moral and pleasing tales, are lost; his other moral productions, illuminated by fancy, bear the same character.

Such a man could not fail in being a poet: he wrote many poems, elegies, and pastoral eclogues, according to the testimony of Landini, who was an excellent judge, but they are, for the most part, lost. He attempted to beat new roads in poetry, endeavoured to adapt the Latin metre to

* The passage deserves to be quoted. A philosopher, called Glestas, after disputing in face of Charon, turns to him, and tells him: "Hæc tu, Charon, intellexisti? Negavit Charon grandioribus verbis pusilliora aut ordinatius confusiora audisse uspiam dici. Sed visne quid sentiam referam de te? puturam vos philosophos omnia nosse, sed quantum ex te video nihil nostis, nisi ita loqui ut de rebus notissimis verba facientes non intelligamini."

Italian verse, by giving us the model of hexameters and pentameters * and, at least, he has proved the possibility of this. We have, in another place, explained the reasons why our poetry is not adapted to such a purpose. To the reasons there adduced we may add, that we should be obliged, particularly in hexameter verse, to make a very frequent use of a kind of slippery words, for the formation of the dactyle feet, which would render the metre monotonous and tiresome. The attempts made by Alberti, and, in the following century, by Tolomei, are condemned by experience, and the rhyme added to the Italian verses has proved a sufficient ornament to supply the inferiority of harmony.

Other metres, better adapted to the Italian language, have been attempted with success by ancient and modern poets. Chiabrera, Testi, Frugoni, furnish us with an example of this; and, in our times particularly, we have been supplied with very pretty copies thereof in the elegant odes of Labindo. Imagination is the mother of the beautiful in every kind, and consequently poets and artists, the fine arts and letters have a close alliance with each other. The dying Dido and the Laocoön of Virgil are inspired by the irradiation of the same genius, which alike guided the chisel of the Greek artist and the pencil of Guercino. The man may, indeed, excite our wonder, who not only paints with poetic colours, not only dives with all possible depth into the principles of the three sister arts, analyzes them like a true philosopher; but, at the same time, takes up either the pencil, the chisel, or the rule, raises edifices, carves statues, and paints pictures.

* The following distich is very well known:

Questa per estrema miserabile epistola mando
A te che spieghi rusticamente noi.

These qualifications, in a professed literato, are so much the more rare, since, looking back not only through the history of our own ages, but those of Rome and ancient Greece, we can only point out one Alberti. The greater part of mankind, ignorant, for the most part, of the merits we have explained, are acquainted with Alberti only in the fine arts, and particularly as a celebrated architect; his work, therefore, which is most commonly admired, is the *Ten Books of Architecture**, written in elegant Latin, and translated into various languages. These have given him the name of the modern Vitruvius; and there are persons even who have placed him above the latter. Upon the revival of arts and letters, this was the first capital work which appeared in Europe, and taught us the rules of architecture with precision. The work is grand and complete; the design is vast, and embraces every thing from the most sublime to the lowest and most mechanical ideas. He descends from buildings of the greatest magnificence, extent, or importance, such as royal palaces, theatres, fortresses, military camps, to the smallest edifices. The judicious author, has always in sight that first rule of architecture, of uniting the beautiful and the magnificent with the useful.

Great geniuses, accustomed to be employed in vast designs, and in the most profound views, frequently disdain minute details; but the author has proved that he knew how to render the sublimity of his genius pliant even to these. He has omitted nothing: he condescends to examine the most ordinary materials of buildings, and enters into discussion upon their strength and durability. We must pardon him some error, which he may have

* *De Re Ædificatoria.*

committed upon the authority of ancient naturalists, an authority which at that time it was a crime to doubt; but when he offers his own observations, they are at once founded upon truth, and are as useful as they are peculiar*.

It would appear desirable to multiply experiments upon objects of such vast importance, and that upon the support of Musschenbroek and others a better examination should be made into the resistance of wood and other materials of buildings. Experiments like these may appear trivial to a sublime philosopher; but he would be compensated by the universal advantage derived from them; nor would the praise due to a wise man in taking into view all the circumstances, be denied him.

The work of Alberti, too, abounds with the most beautiful Greek and Latin erudition, and appears not dictated when his memory was weakened. The writers upon the rules of Belles Lettres and Fine Arts have frequently been accused of writing without the capacity of executing; and that Greek artist is celebrated, who, whilst his rival was making a dissertation with all possible eloquence upon rules, drily said when it became his turn to speak, "what he has spoken I will do: (cio che costui ha detto io farò). Alberti was not one of the former; He could both speak and act; and the splendid buildings

* He confirms, for example, the durable stability of the cypress; by the observation of this wood upon the gates which Adrian III. caused to be erected in St. Peter's, which five hundred years afterwards, that is, in his own times, were still in good preservation. Eugene IV. ordered them to be taken away, and bronze gates placed there. The statue of Capitoline Jove, in the times of Pliny, was five centuries and a half old. We have a proof in other examples of the almost incorruptibility of that wood.

he raised, both in his own country and elsewhere, are a confirmation of the precepts which he taught*. We may pay no attention to speculative theorists; but when Horace gives us rules for the poetic art, Cicero for oratory, Montecuculi or Frederick for military laws, we must listen to them. This work made him considered the first legislator of his age in architecture, and he yields only to his friend, Brunelleschi.

The same may be said of the other arts besides architecture. He has written three elegant books upon painting, and has given us pictures; he has written upon sculpture, and has carved statues; and his works, both of the pencil, the chisel, the burine, and casts, remained in the times of Landino. In his great work upon architecture, we perceive what skill he had in mathematics, in which Verini has placed him upon an equality with Euclid. Various works of natural philosophy and mathematics have been laid aside; and some of his beautiful and important discoveries are either mentioned by others, or attributed to others, as happens to those who are excessively rich, who frequently either lose by negligence, or let treasures be taken away from them without occasioning them much displeasure, unlike those little minds who contend and quarrel about trifles. We must, however, bring back some of them to him.

The very elegant and important invention, attributed so much later to Porta, is of Alberti. George Vasari has given distant hints of it; but the anonymous writer of his life leaves no doubt of it; and, by comparing the passages of these two writers, we shall see that ingenious

* They are described by Vasari and by Pozzetti. Among the former is the Rucellai Palace. Nicholas V. entertained an idea of beginning the building of St. Peter's under his direction.

discovery described with all possible precision*. The anonymous writer finishes the description with one reflection, which confirms the character we have given of him: "He was more intent upon making discoveries than promulgating them,—found greater delight in exercising his genius than in earning fame."

Another ingenious invention is of Alberti, which, after suffering some variation, but no improvement, has been attributed to others, and is mentioned in the Anglican transactions two centuries afterwards, without mention being made of the first inventor. This is an easy instrument for measuring the great depth of the sea. We beg permission to detail it, because the genius of this man, and the utility of the changes made by it, will be better ascertained†.

Take a globe of wood, or other swimming matter, at the bottom of which let there be a spring, with a weight attached to it, with a slight and open noose, kept distended towards the horizon, but freed from the former; let it slacken laterally, and abandon the heavy body. Throw the globe into the sea with the weight attached to it: it will descend rapidly towards the bottom, and the weight attached will be the first to strike it. The globe, from the violence it has received, will also continue to descend a little, and in that instant the spring, freed from the weight which held it distended, will open laterally and abandon the weight, when, returning to the top, it will appear again to the eyes of the observer. Make the experiment either in a known

* Vasari, Life of Alberti. Murat. Rer. Ital. vol. 25, where the Life of Alberti is of an uncertain, but old, author.

† We find the description in the mathematical *Piacevolezze*, addressed by Alberti to a prince of the house of Este.

depth, or in one which has been measured before ; for example, one hundred arms, and the body in the descent and ascent may employ twenty seconds. If double, triple, quadruple time, shall be employed in an unknown depth, the same will be double, triple, quadruple*.

Riccioli makes an objection to this method, by saying, that as the body descends and ascends with an accelerated motion, the spaces gone through correspond not with that proportion ; but he did not observe that all bodies, the fall of which is accelerated across a resisting medium, the resistance increasing as the celerity increases, soon arrive at an end, in which the augmentations of acceleration are nearly and sensibly equal to the increase of resistance, and then the body descends and rises again with equal motion. This case must happen in water sooner than in air, on account of the greater resistance ; whence, after a few feet of acceleration, the body will fall with equal motion. If one hundred feet are taken for the known term to refer the measures to, all the first accelerations are certainly comprehended, besides another space of equability of motion ; the first, being the same in all cases, give rise to no difficulties, and change not the calculation.

The English author has preserved the principal mechanism. He has only rendered it more complicated : he has added to the swimming matter a sphere of metal full of air, which, by means of a spout curved below and open, communicates with the water, which, being prevented by the resistance of the internal air, cannot at

* The minute clocks not being known in the age of Alberti, in order to have an exact measure of the time, they availed themselves of a vase full of water, with a hole which opened at the moment of the descent of the body, and shut again at its re-appearance at the top : the quantity of water issued gave the time.

first penetrate into it. By degrees, as the globe sinks, the action of the weight of the column of water against the internal air increases, reduces it to less space, penetrates into it, and occupies the place left by the condensed air. A column of thirty-two feet of water will reduce the air into a less space than the half, and the usual thirty-two feet will correspond with every double condensation; whence, when the instrument returns to the top, by measuring the space occupied by the water, and the remainder of the air, we shall have the computation how often we are to multiply the thirty-two, and we shall thus have the measure of the profundity sought after.

It is very easy to see the principal difficulty of this instrument: the condensations of air obey the proportion of weights pressing to certain limits, since the more the elements of the air approach each other, so much the more difficult the compression becomes: it can, therefore, be only verified in the middle condensations; but when these increase so much as in the case adduced, it is impossible then for them to follow the required proportion, and the experiment becomes fallacious.

In the mathematical pleasantries the most ingenious treatises are to be found, which are the more valuable, because they are explained by the author with the air of amusement. Mechanism and perspective are governed by geometry, which, when applied to the service of mankind, is not merely a steril theory, but is the greatest proof of genius. It is said by metaphysicians, that philosophical talent consists in seeing the least differences of objects; the poetical, in viewing the most distant relations: but in these definitions there is always something wanting. Imagination, which belongs to the second, unites sometimes with the intellect, and aids it in shewing the relations between abstract truths and the actions of

sensible and real objects, and the application of the former to the latter; hence we have the *impasto*, as it were, the most beautiful and sublime that nature can make, which thus formed the talent of Alberti.

Although his family was exiled from Florence, we may easily imagine that a man like Leon Batista could not remain an exile under the government of the Medicis: he was at once their friend and favourite, one of the advisers, under Piero, of the fine idea of proposing a public premium for the best poem, of which we shall have to speak hereafter. Landino wished to adorn his fictitious or real Camaldoiese disputationes with such a speaker, and we find him one of the guests in the feasts of Lorenzo. The extent of his knowledge, the elegance of his fancy, which had successfully run the career of all the fine arts and letters, the illustrious societies he had frequented, gave a pleasantry to his discourse, and made him a polite jester. He never made the least ostentation of his knowledge, but like the true learned, was both familiar and possessed a golden simplicity, and Panormita, one of the greatest poets of that age, addressed to him the following distich:

Cum placeas cunctis, raris pro dotibus, idem
Tu mihi pro verâ simplicitate places.

If the authority of the encomiasts of his time could add any thing to the many real merits, which are proved by his works, many might be mentioned. Amongst an immense number, it is sufficient to quote Paul Cortese and Angelo Poliziano, who are of themselves an host*. We have only spoken of one part of the works of Alberti;

* The second, having spoken of the variety of sciences and arts, in which Alberti distinguished himself, adds, "Cum ita adamassim teneret omnia, ut vix pauci singula."

but of the most important certainly, and those adapted to give us a sufficient idea of his extraordinary talent. It has been already mentioned that he was a priest. For some time he had the parish of Santa Maria a Gangalandi, and was probably a canon of Florence; hence it may be easily imagined, that a man of a talent so extensive, neglected not ecclesiastical studies, which were so appropriate to his situation in life: and, in fact, he arrived at so great a reputation in them, that several fathers of the council of Ferrara turned their attention to him, for the compilation of the ecclesiastical annals. He undertook the work, and a sketch still remains of them.

The history of the conspiracy of Porcaro against Nicholas V. is a proof of the historical talent he possessed *. What more? He has given a treatise even upon the method of writing in ciphers. Alberti has been analyzed by separating part from part, and discompounding ingredients which are so different from each other. The reader must now, by a kind of synthesis, endeavour to recompound him, that is, form an idea of what he was, and of his vast value †. He died in Rome in 1472. But we have already passed the limits of that brevity we ought to obey, a fault which we hope the reader will pardon us both in this and in other cases, where men present themselves to us, who make an excuse for us, since we promise to recompense him with brevity, wherever the vain appearance of science without solidity,

* Murat. Rer. Ital. tom. 5.

† The catalogue of his works may be seen in Mazzuchelli Scritt. Ital. Some works, either his or attributed to him, are unpublished; many are laid aside, and some preserved only in the translation made by Bartoli. In a code of S. Lorenzo Plut. 90. supra Cod. 57. Menb. in 8vo. p. 88., there is a collection of spirited jests attributed to him.

and the blind admiration of cotemporaries, constitute the ephemeral fame of a literato. The man of whom we have spoken, great in profound sciences, equally as in belles lettres, serves us in the mean time as a passage from the former to the latter, and placed upon their confines, let him be the ring of communication between one and the other.

BELLES LETTRES.

Literature, and particularly the study of the learned languages, already begun in the other, formed the glory of this epoch. It was brought to such maturity at this period, that the Italians, and the Tuscans particularly, were able to vie with the natives even of Greece, their cotemporaries, in comprehending their classic authors. The language of Latium became so familiar in writing to the pens of the Italians, that if Tully, Cæsar, Maro, and Flaccus, would sometimes have laughed at expressions and ill-chosen phrases, they would have been frequently surprised at the success with which men, removed from them by so many ages, imitated them so well in a dead language. The study of languages, therefore, the interpretation of the classics, their translation, particularly of the Greek, the various erudition, and all that is comprehended under the name of philology, were the qualifications, in which the learned employed themselves with success, and they were indeed so far immersed in this study, that, intent upon foreign languages, for a long time they neglected their own.

The numerous discoveries which were made, about this time, of the Greek and Latin codes, which, so long forgotten and covered with dirt and dust, were not far from destruction, served to stimulate them to this career. As a man immersed in a profound sleep, however long

that sleep may last, indulges a reasonable hope, that while the strength of life remains, he will finally awake; so the human race, which has so often fallen into this slumber of ignorance, have afterwards re-awakened; but this slumber, even without the favour and impulse given by the various Mecænasses to letters, would indeed have ceased, but probably later. Every delay, however, was fatal to the venerable remains of antiquity, which, buried amidst obscurity, were in the mean time destroyed by time and worms; and, consequently, the cares taken by Cosmo and his descendants were highly useful, and have probably saved a great number of them.

Search had even begun to be made after them in the last epoch. Petrarch, Boccaccio, Coluccio Salutati, Pallas Strozzi, and others, had possessed no few of them. Guarino of Verona, Aurispa the Sicilian, Filelfo, travelling into Greece to acquire a profound knowledge of the language of that country, returned loaded both with new knowledge, and with codes *. The second, particularly, brought with him more than two hundred, amongst which were some of the most illustrious authors; such as the verses of Pindar, of Oppian, those attributed to Orpheus, the works of Plato, of Proclus, of Xenophon, of Lucian, Dion, Diodorus Siculus, the geography of Strabo, and others of no less merit †. Many of them, which appeared for the first time in Italy must have been regarded with the greatest admiration, and sought after with an equal avidity. Aurispa was generously assisted by the two brothers, Cosmo and Lorenzo, with no inconsiderable sums ‡.

* Those brought by Guarino were not numerous, if it be not true that the greater part of them were lost in a shipwreck.

† Epist. ad Ambr. Camal. lib. 24.

‡ Loc. Cit. book 24. Epis. Aur. 37.

Poggio Bracciolini, a native of Terranuova, made his researches elsewhere. When at the council of Constance, in the service of the pontifical court, he visited the Abbey of S. Gallo, and disinterred from the dirt in which they were buried, a nentire Quintilian, the first three books and a half of the fourth of the Argonauts of Valerius Flaccus, the explanation of Ascanius Pedianus, of eight orations of Cicero, some works of Lactantius, Tertullianus, the architecture of Vitruvius, and Priscianus *. Poggio travelled through various parts of France and Germany, and penetrated even into England. He had discovered, as we infer from his writings, besides the codes we have mentioned, Silius Italicus, Marcellinus, Manilius, Lucius Septimius, Capros, Eutichius, Probus the grammarian, Columella, Frontinus of the Aqueducts, a part of the poem of Lucretius, &c †.

Cosmo de Medicis employed all his diligence in searching after and collecting such precious treasures. The extent of his commerce and correspondence with the most remote countries was vast, and his distant agents received, probably with astonishment, commissions at the same time both for drugs and for codes. There is still some doubt ‡ whether he sent Christopher Buondelmonti into Greece purposely, in search of books; but it is certain that to various cities, particularly of Tuscany, he sent able persons, such as Anthony of Massa, Andrew of Rimini, and others, to go in search of them. Although Cosmo was not (as we have already said) what is properly called a man of letters, a name which his nephew Lorenzo merited in all the extent of the

* Pogg. Epist. Rer. Ital. Scrip. tom. 20. p. 160.

† Pogg. Orat. pro Nicol. Niccol. Descrip. Urbis Rom. Mehus ad Ambr. Camald.

‡ Tirab. History of Literature, tom. 6. p. 1. book 1.

term, we discover the esteem in which he held books on a thousand occasions, and particularly from the ardour he evinced in forming libraries. An exile from Florence to Venice, he thought he could not better shew his gratitude for the hospitality used towards him by the friars of the monastery of S. George, than by erecting a library there under the direction of the celebrated Michelozzo Michelozzi, who had accompanied him into his exile, and by enriching it with various codes *.

The magnificence displayed by Cosmo in these precious collections was manifested at various times, but particularly in the celebrated Medicean Laurentian library. The idea of collecting a copious quantity of books, to answer the public advantage, is grand and beneficent. Hereby many men of talent, whose poverty forms an obstacle to penetrate into the fountains of knowledge, find them opened to them. Such an establishment, at all times praiseworthy, was particularly serviceable at that time, when the rare manuscripts, preserved with so much jealousy by the possessors, were not accessible with facility, and it appeared even necessary to be rich in order to gain instruction.

This thought first suggested itself, before any other, to Pallas Strozzi, who endeavoured to collect a public library in the centre of Florence, for greater convenience in the monastery of S. Trinità, but was prevented both by the unfortunate vicissitudes which attended him, and by exile †.

We are indebted to Nicholas Niccoli, another Florentine, who, without the riches of Cosmo, was animated with the laudable desire of collecting books for so noble an institution. The son of a merchant, he was obliged

* Vasari, Life of Michelozzi.

† See Hist. Præs. anno 1434.

by his father to devote himself to commerce, which he neglected for letters, and, instead of frequenting the merchants' walks and the society of bankers, he passed his time in the company of learned men, with whom Florence greatly abounded. Upon the death of his father, he cultivated the study of Greek and Latin letters with all diligence, and made great advances in them. His most ardent passion was evinced in collecting books, by sacrificing immense sums to their acquisition, so that he possessed the most copious collection of codes known in his age. This passion made him a diligent and laborious copyist of the former, which have acquired singular merit from so intelligent a man, who copied, corrected, and sometimes even made notes, at the same time. If advanced age had not prevented him, he meditated a journey into Greece, for the accomplishment of his purpose. A patron of the greatest geniuses, he gave himself every care to attract them to Florence. Of a mild character, and upright in his intentions, he thought only of promoting studies. He was, perhaps, too frank in pronouncing his opinion upon the merit of irritable literati, and, consequently, drew their satirical invectives upon himself, which are no longer attended to, however, because some of them, as Poggio, are in manifest contradiction with themselves, and praised him so much after his death. Praise like this, when envy is appeased, is more to be valued than slander in life; and we will adhere to the eulogy which Poggio himself makes of him, since his other detractors, as Filelfo, are too much discredited, on account of the scandal they allowed themselves, to deserve any attention*.

* Pogg. Orat. Funeb. Nicc. Giann. Manetti Vita, &c.

But the books, and the laudable end to which he destined them, are what interest us most. He ordered in his will, that the copious collection should be for the public use. He charged sixteen of the principal citizens with the manner in which this was to be carried into effect, amongst whom we find the names of the brothers Medicis, Cosmo and Lorenzo, and the most learned men of Florence, such as Leonardo Bruni, Poggio, Marsuppini, Ambrogio Camaldoiese, Leon Batista Alberti, Gianotto Manetti, &c. Had it not been, however, for the generosity of Cosmo, this fine establishment would probably never have existed; since the debts left by the testator almost absorbed the value of the books. Cosmo took upon himself the burthen of satisfying the creditors, and disposing, as he chose, of the books. The magnificent convent of Saint Mark's was now erecting under his orders. Here he caused a library to be constructed, placed therein the books of Niccoli, added to them many of his own, and those acquired by Philip Peruzzi, by the heirs of Salutati, and by Ambrogio of Camaldoli.

This library, as we have already noted, had the honour of possessing Nicholas V. as a president, who was then beginning his illustrious career, and who received the commission from Cosmo to attend to its regulation and disposition. Upon rebuilding the library afterwards, which had been destroyed by an earthquake, Cosmo added a room to it, wherein books of all languages, Arabic, Indian, Chaldean, and Hebrew, were collected. Vespasiano, a Florentine, a bookseller by profession, but who was in a situation to enter into contest with the learned, was one of the principal instruments of which Cosmo availed himself to collect the books. This library must be considered as the most celebrated, because

it was the first upon the revival of letters, the treasures of which were continually opened to the public.

But the generosity of Cosmo did not stop here. The magnificent abbey of the regular clergy of S. Bartholomew, near Fiesole, was enriched by him with a library. The picturesque wood in the pleasing valleys of the Mugello, where the convent of S. Francesco is situated, resembles those delightful groves which the poetic imagination has painted in Arcadia. To this convent, too, which was not far distant from his Caffaggiolo, Cosmo presented a collection of books, thinking that the hours not devoted to religious duties could not be better filled up by those pious recluses than in reading.

It is very natural to imagine, that a man who loved books so greatly, who had his house always full of literati, would not neglect such an ornament in his own palace; all the Florentine writers speak of it, and although the learned Tiraboschi thinks not that the proofs of the domestic library of Cosmo are established, the recent illustrious English author of the *Life of Lorenzo the Magnificent* has sufficiently confirmed it, by substantial demonstrations*.

The same taste for literature, the same avidity for acquiring books, had become general throughout the city of Florence, and many learned and rich citizens, both before Cosmo, during his time, and after him, made copious collections. Amongst these were Pallas Strozzi, Poggio, Giannozzo Manetti, Piero de' Pazzi, Angelo Gaddi and others†.

* Roscoe, in his *Life of Lorenzo*, vol. i, note 59, has mentioned some verses of Avogadri de' Munificentia Cosmi, where he distinctly speaks of the library of St. Mark's, and again of the private one of Cosmo, since, describing his palace, he exclaims,

O mira in tectis bibliotheca tuis!

† Mehus. *Vita Ambr. Camald. Band. Catal. vol. 4.*

All, however, were surpassed by Lorenzo the Magnificent. Cosmo, his grandfather, was animated with a zeal for promoting letters, and inherited ample means for satisfying it, without, however, possessing much learning. The above-mentioned possessed learning without his means. Piero, his son, imbibed the same taste, but had but little time to display it ; and his short life, as head of the house of Medicis, falls in the midst of the splendour of his father Cosmo, and his son Lorenzo, who eclipse him. But Lorenzo was gifted with all the passion of an intelligent literato for books, and the means of satisfying it. Not content with the acquisitions made by his grandfather and father, nor with those his riches enabled him to make in Italy, he chose to search for them in that classic country, the mother and nurse of Homer, of Demosthenes, and other illustrious authors ; which had latterly experienced the most terrible catastrophe.

The literary glory of Athens and of Greece, the similitude between Tuscany and the latter, and Florence and the former, particularly in arts and letters, may offer an excuse for the writer in entering into a brief digression upon the vicissitudes which attended that country. The times of the greatest splendour of Athens and Greece, when arms, letters, and arts rendered her alike the first of nations, is too well known to claim our attention now : this nation, even after the loss of her liberty, maintained her superiority over others both in arts and literature. Not only the Roman youth, but mankind from all the corners of the empire, where knowledge was held in any esteem, repaired in haste to Athens for instruction ; and the first patricians of Rome frequently sought therein a port from the storms of civil commotions.

Athens, in the sanguinary vicissitudes, in which factions involved the Romans, found herself exposed to the fury of parties; but a veneration for the illustrious philosophers, who had been her fellow-citizens, saved her frequently from the enraged conqueror; and, if the ferocious Sylla, irritated by the contumelious loquacity of the Athenians*, treated them barbarously, the generous Cæsar, against whom the Athenians had taken up arms, said he pardoned the survivors in remembrance of the dead who had rendered them illustrious.

Thus by degrees Greece was reduced to boast only of this kind of glory, as an illustrious decayed family consoles itself with boasting of the riches it anciently possessed, and proudly points to the famous portraits of its ancestors. The Greek philosophy was strangely disfigured by sophists, and the muses, instead of those dresses, so well known for their simplicity, in which they were one day clothed by the songster of Achilles, and by that of the conquerors of the Olympic games, became covered with far-fetched ornaments, and a meretricious daub.

After that the seat of empire was transferred to the confines of Europe, and Constantinople became the seat of power and riches, all those who were in search of fame and fortune in letters, hastened to establish themselves in it. Athens, however, always retained the superiority. The schools remained open, and the degenerate descendants of Plato and Aristotle walked in the academy, in the portico, in the gardens, instructing the youth which still repaired thither in crowds to that fountain, the waters of which (although it maintained its ancient celebrity) were become impure.

* Sylla had a ruddy face, and with white spots: the Athenians called him a strawberry covered with meal.—Plutarch's Life of Sylla.

It is easy to imagine that the first philosophers exercised their sciences liberally; and that Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, would not demean themselves to make a traffic of knowledge: but soon poverty, which not rarely is the companion of great genius, was obliged to seek a reward. Even Socrates found himself in this humiliating necessity. The legacies finally left to this public institution, or the liberality shown towards it by the philosophic emperors, established funds, with which the masters of Athens were paid even to profusion; and, as in the greater part of our modern universities, the young men, who attended them, found professors ready to instruct them without expense. This noble institution continued down to the times of the Emperor Justinian. A religion which inculcates a blind credence to its mysteries, could not willingly bear with persons who dared to doubt of all, or who took the liberty of examining her secrets with the torch of reason; the school of Athens was consequently shut up by order of the pious emperor, and the philosophers went dolefully wandering far from that city which had for so many ages been the seat of science and of literature*.

Greece, however, still retained one rich patrimony, bequeathed to her by her ancestors; viz., the classic authors, and the innumerable works of art in bronze or in marble, which, being scattered profusely everywhere, pleased the eye and instructed the mind; while the former still maintained a taste, which, however greatly deteriorated, rendered Greece, for a long time, superior to all the provinces of the world. The writings, however, upon the increase of barbarism were either forgotten or destroyed; and time or avidity either threw to the

* Vide Meurs. de Fortuna Attic.

ground, or plundered, the fine monuments of art. The ancient Romans brought infinite chefs-d'œuvres to Rome. Mummius, out of vanity, despoiled the conquered Corinth of her statues, without knowing their value*. Nero ordered an infinite number of the finest of these productions of the chisel to be transported to Rome ; and five hundred were taken from the Temple of Delphos to adorn his *golden house* †.

One of the greatest misfortunes which the capital of the East suffered, happened at the beginning of the thirteenth century, in the fourth crusade, from the barbarity practised by the Latins, the Venetians, and the Franks. After having despoiled the palaces, the churches, the very altars, of whatever they contained most precious, and which had been collected by the generous devotion of the christians ; after having taken the masterly artificial gold and silver, to which, however, the eager hand of destruction paid no attention, whether the matter was superior or not to the work, they finally turned their eyes upon the bronze. The chefs-d'œuvres of the most illustrious artists, which were scattered with profusion in decoration of the capital, were destroyed ; the colossal statues of the gods, the heroes, of animals of so many kinds, barbarously thrown to the ground, and melted,

* Mummius tam rudis fuit, ut capta Corintho quum maximorum artificum perfectas maribus tabulas ac statuas in Italia portandus locaret, juberit prædicti conducentibus, si ea perdidissent, novas esse reddituros.—Vell. Patrc. lib. 1. c. 13.

All the governors of provinces, either from taste or vanity took away monuments of the arts. The rapacity of Verres collected so many as to occasion the Abbé Fraguier to write a dissertation upon the gallery of Verres.

† Amongst these Winkelmann thinks there was the Apollo of Belvedere, the Fighting Gladiator of Villa Pinciana, or the statue of Cabria.

were converted into vulgar pieces of coin: An amateur of the fine arts may shed a tear over the long list of those statues given by Nicetas, who was an ocular witness*, and who bewails their destruction in pathetic terms†. The conflagrations to which that unhappy city was thrice exposed must have destroyed many precious manuscripts‡.

Greece, even after so many losses, was still rich; and the West was continually growing richer in her spoils. Constantinople had taken the place of Athens; and, before the melancholy catastrophe which happened to her, was considered as the seat of science. No literato was held in repute who had not visited that city§, when a final blow annihilated the vacillating eastern empire, and a horde of barbarians, ignorant of every degree of civilization, inundated those unfortunate provinces. The capture of Constantinople by Mahomet II., in the year 1453, extinguished the last faint remains of letters and arts in Greece, and dispersed the learned, who, exiled from their native country, took refuge particularly in

* Nicetas Choniates of Chone, a city of Phrygia, filled offices of dignity at the imperial court.

† Fabr. Bibliot. Græc. vol. 77. pp. 401, 402. We cannot, indeed, read the passage of Nicetas without indignation, when we see the works of Lisippus and other illustrious artists melted to make brass coins. Nicetas, who mentions so many of them, fixes his attention particularly upon those of Hercules and Helen, with so much taste as to prove that, if great artists were wanting, the sense of the beautiful was not. The statue of Hercules, probably a work of Lisippus, was of so gigantic a stature, that an arm equalled the size of a man. Harris, in his philology, has caused a gem to be engraved by Bartolozzi, which is supposed to represent that statue described by Nicetas: there are, however, differences.

‡ Paol. Ramus de Bello Constantinop.

§ Nemo Latinorum satis doctus videri poterat nisi Constantinopoli aliquando studuisse. — *Æn. lib. epist.*

Italy, where they could be valued according to their merit*.

Florence, above every other city of Italy, and the House of Medicis, were distinguished for the hospitable reception given to the illustrious refugees. Flattery has had no share in the elegant representation which adorns the hall of the ground-floor of the Palace Pitti, from the pencil of John Mannozzi, where the Muses are painted as exiled from Greece, and meeting a courteous reception from that house. Fancy has only served to adorn the truth. It is easy to imagine, that the Greek fugitives had no opportunity of carrying with them their literary treasures, and that, on the contrary, these treasures ran the risk of being entirely destroyed. This might have been the case, if the conquerors, followers, like the Arabs, of the dogmas of Mahomet, had interpreted them, as the barbarous Omar is supposed to have done, by condemning the library of Alexandria to the flames; if, indeed, this anecdote, received now-a-days in literature as an authentic fact, be not an invention of Abulfaragio, the Arab, who wrote in Meda six hundred years after the conflagration, since his cotemporaries are silent upon it†.

* Many of the most celebrated French writers making a great mistake, fix the beginning of the rise of letters in this epoch.—D'Alembert (*Essai sur les Elemens de Philosophie*. “La prise de Constantinople au milieu du cinquième siècle a fait renaitre les lettres en occident.”—Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Discours sur les Sciences et les Arts*. “Ce fut le stupide Mousulman, ce fut l'éternel fléau des lettres, qui les fit renaitre parmi nous : la chute du Trône de Constantin porta dans l'Italie les débris de l'ancienne Grèce,” &c.

The present history has hitherto shewn the fallacy of this opinion; and Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, and many others, sufficiently confute it.

† See the learned Gibbon, who, in our opinion, evidently demonstrates the falsehood of this anecdote.

Lorenzo the Magnificent, some time after that catastrophe, desirous of drawing from Greece whatever books might remain there, sent Lascaris* for that purpose. This man was one of those learned Greeks, who had taken refuge at his court. The fame and authority Lorenzo enjoyed, too, with the Turks, greatly contributed to facilitate the enterprise. Lascaris, therefore, was sent with a public character to the sultan Bajazette, who, out of favour to Lorenzo, permitted him to search after the remains of the ancient libraries, not only in Greece but even in Asia. Lascaris appears to have made two journeys, in one of which, he formed a friendship with the bashaw Acomat †, by whom he was singularly favoured in his researches. In one of these journeys he transported not less than two hundred codes with him, eighty of which were utterly unknown to Italy. These were a respectable addition, therefore, to the domestic Medicean library; but the return of Lascaris was too late for Lorenzo, who died without the pleasure of contemplating them.

These Medicean libraries met with dangerous vicissitudes in the civil convulsions which agitated Florence. We are assured that upon the palace of the Medicis being sacked upon the entry of the French under Charles VIII., even the manuscripts were dispersed. The respectable

* Valori, *Vita Laur. Mehus. Pref. ad Amin. Cam.*

† This bashaw was a Christian renegade, a native of Illyrium, son of a nobleman of that country, made a Turk from spite of having seen his father run away with, and marry, a beautiful girl of the family of the despot of Servia, in the moment that she was to have been married to him. He was, however, always a secret Christian: preserved a hidden crucifix, which he adored in the night, and which he shewed to Lascaris, from whom Giovio learnt this anecdote. *Jovius Hist. lib. 13.*

testimony given by Paul Rucellai, appears to leave no doubt of this ; nevertheless, no small doubt arises, if it be true, as historians attest, that King Charles, upon entering Florence, took up his abode in that palace which had been destined for him by the public. It would not appear, therefore, that the sacking could have taken place *, which was carried into effect upon the Casino of St. Mark, and the other palace belonging to the Cardinal John at S. Anthony's †. In the confusion, however, which ensued in the city from that military licentiousness, which thinks every thing allowable, it is not improbable that the officers and courtiers, who inhabited the principal palace of the Medicis, might have taken away precious moveables and books, if, indeed, they were a kind of merchandise which could allure them. Be it as it may, either the books were dispersed in the sacking ‡, or only decreased in number, they were recovered by the Florentines, who, to avoid a similar misfortune,

* The sacking might have happened before, viz. ; in the act of the flight of Piero as Ammirato appears to have indicated ; but can this historian, however exact, and who is so much later, prevail over the authority of Rucellai, who was an ocular witness ?

† Jovius Histor. In these palaces, too, books, cameos, engravings, &c., must have been found, whence it being understood, that Rucellai speaks only of this 'palace, every thing agrees.

‡ The fury of factions pays no respect to any documents. In the civil wars of England, in the sacking made of the palace of the house of Howard, the famous inscriptions called Arundel marbles were broken and thrown to the ground, which had been brought from Greece to the number of two hundred and fifty, by Petteo, in a commission given him by the Earl of Arundel, and deposited in the garden of that nobleman since the year 1627 : such was the barbarism in the times of civil convulsions that part of these marbles were made use of to repair gates and windows. When order was restored, and the family re-established; the nephew of the collector having regained them, made a present of them to the university of Oxford.

united them with others in the library of St. Mark's. It is related by the annalist of the convent that the Florentine republic which preserved her control over it, finding herself in great want of money, in the year 1496, resolved upon selling the books which were deposited there; when the friars, in order to preserve them, lent the community 2,000 florins, and by the addition of another 1,000 the friars came into possession of them. When the convent of St. Mark's was threatened in the tumults raised by the populace, the books were transferred to the public palace, and upon the tumult having ceased, they were replaced. The friars afterwards found themselves in the same necessity with the republic, and upon their proposing to sell them, the books were purchased by the Cardinal de Medicis, in 1508, and brought to Rome; and afterwards, in the year 1527, by order of Pope Clement VII. they were again brought back to Florence, where they were deposited in that stable sojourn they at present enjoy, forming the Medicean Laurentian library*. In contemplating this precious collection it is pleasing, to think of the vicissitudes it has

* Whatever credit the annalist of St. Mark's may deserve, many things difficult to be understood present themselves to us in these details. By what right could the Florentine republic alienate a legacy of Niccoli, made for the good of the public, and augmented by Cosmo, who had made her a present both of the expenses and the addition to the convent, consecrated to public utility? Perhaps having re-purchased them, she thought she had a right to dispose of them. But the republic had only purchased back a part of them, the inheritance of Niccoli remaining always entire and in its place, and how could that republic, who had purchased them again when they had been dispersed in time of the French invasion, a period of her greatest wants, think of selling them for so small a sum, and so little fitted to repair the loss of them, when her citizens, although agitated by civil convulsions, were great lovers of letters?

gone through, to reflect upon the dangers it has escaped, and how easily Florence might have been deprived of it*.

These treasures of Greek and Latin literature, which were collected from so many parts, both in Florence and the other cities of Italy, and exposed to the eyes of men, must naturally have attracted the curiosity of all men of genius to read them, and consequently to make interpretations of them, a labour which demanded long and patient perseverance. Hence arose the spirit of this age, which was that of interpreters, translators of various erudition and of philology. Tuscany abounds in this epoch with literati of this description to such a degree, that to mention them only with the works they have written would form too long a catalogue. It must suffice, therefore, to touch slightly upon the names and works of some of the most celebrated, as the purport of our work demands, which is, to give the character of the literati of Tuscany of this age.

Since, however, their studies were the same, and they were learned both in the Greek and Latin languages, authors, too, for the most part in these languages, both in verse and in prose, almost all of them translators, and many of them historians, we shall not distinguish them into so many classes, but only place them in that order which either the country, or the period, or particular matter, may indicate. Some of them appertain both to the past and present epoch, and unite them together. Such is Leonard Bruni, commonly called from his native place Leonard the Aretine. He was one of the first luminaries of his age. He was born in the year 1369, and the lively ardour he evinced for letters, is afforded us by himself in the detail he gives of the sacking of his

* Bandini, Prefat. ad tom. 4. Catalogi, &c.

native place*, when a boy, being separated from his father, and shut up in a room in the borough of Quarata, insensible to so many sad events, he contemplated the portrait of Petrarch accidentally in that house, and felt himself inflamed with a noble emulation. Being intended for the study of the law, he preferred that of the Greek language, which Crisoloras taught with so much applause in Florence, and became one of the first Grecians.

He was honourably employed by various pontiffs. He united a knowledge of political affairs with literature and the employments of the court in which he was always engaged. He was proposed by Poggio for one of the apostolic secretaries to Innocent VII., when his youth and a more experienced, and at that time, more celebrated, rival, Angeli of Scarperia, made them hesitate upon the choice. The pope had recourse to an experiment: the theme of a letter to be written to the Duke of Berry was given to both of them, and the decision was in favour of Bruni†. Being thus honourably elected Apostolic Secretary, he described in a masterly manner the sanguinary turbulence which agitated Rome, and for which he was obliged to fly from thence in the company of the pontiff. Upon his return to Rome, he refused a bishopric which the pope offered him. He was honoured with the friendship and confidence of Gregory XII., and long followed him amidst his vicissitudes. He was secretary of Alexander V. and of John XXIII. Being called to Florence, he held for a considerable time, the important office of Chancellor of the Republic, but he appeared to have a particular affection for pontiffs, and particularly for John. He accompanied him in the

* See the present History, an. 1384.

† Apost. Zeno.

council of Constance, where, however, seeing the tempest continually increasing against him, Bruni was even obliged to place himself in safety, and retired to Florence. Martin V., who was afterwards there, was irritated by the satires and loquacity the Florentines directed against him, and Bruni studied to appease him*. He refused, however, to follow him, and finally preferring the service of the Florentine republic to all honours and expectations, he was numbered among the citizens by the advice of Cosmo, father of his country, enjoyed the principal honours and offices, was frequently elected one of the council of ten, a prior, and sent ambassador both to popes and sovereigns.

He was again elected chancellor and secretary of the Florentine republic, and terminated his life in that honourable office about the year 1444. Florence honoured him with a magnificent funeral, and Giannozzo Manetti, who recited his funeral oration, crowned him with all due ceremony, with laurel †. The Florentine republic shewed the wisdom by which she was guided, in scattering such decorations over the tomb of illustrious men, knowing how great a spur to the living is a pompous ceremony which accompanies the dead; but the volume of his histories which was placed upon his breast, make a tacit, but more expressive, eulogy of him. A decent mausoleum which was erected in the church of the Holy Cross, a temple destined to preserve the ashes of great men, reminds us continually of his merits. The learned, and among them, Æneas Silvius, vied with each other in scattering poetic flowers over his tomb, the inscription

* See present History, anno 1420 in note.

† See Life of Manetti of Naldo Naldi, Rer. Ital. Scrip. tom. 20.

upon which is a proof of the sentiments which his age had for him *.

His letters and other works breathe a gentle and modest character, far from that uncourteous petulance which frequently disgraced the learned of that time. Amid the multitude of occupations, in which the Aretine found himself always involved, it excites our astonishment that he could find time to write so much. Many of his translations from the Greek, both of the moral and political discourses of Aristotle, and various pamphlets of Plutarch, Plato, Æschines, Xenophon, San Basilius, &c., are handed down to us, together with many treatises of various themes, partly printed, partly inedited, epistles, orations, and even a Latin comedy called *Polixena*.

But what is chiefly interesting to us at present, is the historian. In imitation of the custom of his age, he wrote in Latin. We shall leave aside the ancient history, and consequently the two books of the Carthaginian war, which are an extract or translation of Polybius; the four of the war of the Goths, in which he has made the same work upon Procopius, which made him accused of plagiarism †; but the commentary of his times, in two

* Postquam Leonardus e vitâ migravit,
Historia luget, Eloquentia muta est
Ferturque Musas tum Græcas tum Latinas
Lacrymas tenere non potuisse.

† The accusation is calumnious, since before even publishing it, when he announced this work to his friends, he said he had taken it from another writer. See Epis. lib. 9. Epist. 5. and 9. Whoever speaks so, does not wish to be a plagiarist. The announcement of this work can alone appear singular, and especially in addressing it to King Alphonso, from having been silent upon the name of Procopius, which he probably did from a desire that his work might be read first, since at the name of Procopius, all, probably, would have chosen to read the original.

books, is a very interesting document, as well as the Florentine history, in twelve books, from the origin of Florence down to 1404, of many of the events narrated in which he was ocular witness. In the lives of Dante and Petrarch, too, he has done a service to letters, by having been able to transmit to us, as nearer the age of those illustrious men, accounts which probably would have remained unknown. The clear and simple style in which they are written, is not without elegance, and we perceive from the comparison which may be made with that of Petrarch and others prior to him, how much Leonard improved it.

Bruni, therefore, may be placed at the head of those who gave most encouragement at the beginning of the fifteenth century to Greek and Latin literature. Crisoloras was the primary fountain whence the former was derived; and was not Leonard his most celebrated scholar? and for the latter, too, was not Bruni the first to rub off a certain rust of barbarism and harshness, with which they were covered? In the historical style, if we except Bernard Rucellai, who wrote with Sallustian force and elegance at the end of that century, and probably at the beginning of the following, there is none in that age who rivals him. This is the opinion also of one of the most judicious writers of that age, Paul Cortese*.

* *Dial. de Hominibus Doctis.* “ *Hic (Leonardus) primus inconditam scribendi consuetudinem ad numerosum quendam sonum inflexit, et attulit hominibus nostris aliquid certe splendidius . . . historiam scripsit accurate . . . consilia et bellorum initia explicantem valde prudenter, consecutatur in historia quiddam Livianum, sed quum historia rerum omnium difficilissima tantum in ea consequutus est, ut omnibus mea sententia qui post eum fuerunt facile præstiterit.*” For the events of the Life of Bruni, see Mehus, who has written the Life, and Mazzuchelli *Scritt. Ital.*, who describes at length the catalogue of his works.

Charles Marsuppini was another Aretine, little inferior to Leonard in literary merit. He rivalled Filelfo in the chair of the Greek language, who was considered the most learned man therein in Italy; and Florence saw her scholars equally divided between them. Pope Eugene IV. created him apostolic secretary. The great Francis, Duke of Milan, wished to do honour to his court, by adding thereto the name of Charles; but the latter, liking Florence, preferred, to every other, the office of secretary of the republic, in which he succeeded Bruni. His ashes received the same honours as those of Leonard. His scholar, Matthew Palmieri, performed the solemn function, and the city of Arezzo sent two deputies to assist at it, as she had done to Leonard. He was equally honoured with the latter, in having a mausoleum erected to him in the same temple. These are the testimonies of the esteem in which his age held him. His works are hardly known now: the translation alone of the *Batrachomyomachia* was given to the public with the prints. His son, if he arrived not at the celebrity enjoyed by the father, distinguished himself also greatly in the same studies. The principal merit of these men, more than the works which are now fallen into oblivion, consisted in the ardour with which they promoted the study of Greek and Latin letters, diffused a taste for them, and greatly contributed to make them flourish.

Benedict Accolti may be added to these illustrious Aretines, in order not to interrupt the series. He was brother of the celebrated lawyer already mentioned, and father of another literato, a poet particularly, of whom we shall have to speak in his place. He cultivated jurisprudence like his brother, but afterwards abandoned it, and devoted himself to more pleasing studies. He wrote the history of the sacred war, in which Geoffrey of Bouillon conquered Jerusalem; an history, which, if

criticism may have discovered defects in it, by the light acquired in later ages, gained the suffrages of the age, from the clearness and elegance with which it was written, and Tasso even appears to have had it before his eyes in forming the texture of his poem. . He dedicated the history to Piero de Medicis. Like his other fellow-citizens, he was chancellor or secretary of the Florentine republic, a friend of the muses, and one of the Platonic Academicians, worthy of being mentioned by Ficino*. The reader cannot but admire the wisdom displayed by the Florentine republic, in choosing her secretaries among the first literati; their history forms a part of the history of letters. We are sometimes accustomed to ask the reason, why Florence was so crowded with learned men, and remote and far-fetched causes are adduced, when the true one is so obvious, viz., the honour in which they were held, the importance given to them, and the considerable offices to which they were raised.

Poggio Bracciolini was successor in the same office to Charles Marsuppini, although in advanced years. He was one of the most learned men of the age. If Terranuova, his native place, be considered in the district of Arezzo, he forms an addition to the series of illustrious Aretines†. His humble origin, spoken of with so much contempt by his enemy, Lorenzo Valla, is only a greater motive to esteem him, since he was obliged to surmount great obstacles to arrive at the luminous post he attained, and which he owed to his pro-

* Ficin. Epis. ad Uranium.

† Tiraboschi places it in the district of Arezzo, and it is in the Aretine diocese. In the times of Poggio it was rebuilt by the Florentines, and was therefore considered in the district of Florence.

found learning*. He was born in 1380, and, coming to Florence, became one of the most distinguished Greek scholars of Crisoloras, whom he attended to for two years. Besides the Greek he learnt the Hebrew. Going to Rome, he became a writer of pontifical letters, and passed about fifty years, with various interruptions however, in that court, without deriving great advantage; a very common fate with great literati, who, intent rather upon books, than the means of acquiring fortune, suffer themselves to be surpassed therein by middling talents, who, occupied only with their own advancement, either perceive, or are better acquainted with hitting, the proper opportunities, than themselves. In the intervals in which he absented himself from Rome, he undertook those various travels in Germany and England; we have mentioned elsewhere, in which he disinterred so many illustrious authors.— Fed with vain hopes, under various pontiffs, in the place called by a spirited poet†,

Il publico spedal delle speranze.

(The public hospital of hopes.)

He returned finally undeceived to Florence, where, as is inferred from the letter in which he describes the triumphal return of Cosmo, he had been always attached to the family of the Medicis. He obtained the respectable office of chancellor or secretary of the republic.

It is necessary to remark that those who were promoted in this epoch by the Florentines to honourable employments, were indebted for their promotion, in great

* Some *bel esprit* has said, that to arrive at honours, in spite of lowness of birth, in the midst of so many persons who have this advantage, and run the same career, is the same as gaining a game at chess by giving the adversary the tower.

† Caporali, Cap. della Corte.

neasure, to the protection they enjoyed from the House of Medicis, which governed the republic, and held learning in such high esteem. Poggio lived the greater part of his life a bachelor, putting on, as his employment required, the ecclesiastical habit, which prevented him not from having three natural children. He abandoned this way of life at an advanced age, and near fifty-five, married a young woman of eighteen, named Selvaggia, daughter of Ghino Manenti Buondelmonti. He endeavoured to justify this act in a dialogue which has never been published, by starting the question whether it was proper for a man, advanced in years, to take a wife*. Poggio has written numerous works, either as a translator or original author, which proves the extent of knowledge he possessed. Many of those moral pieces which were received in those times with so much applause, are now no longer read : such are *de Humanæ Conditionis Miseria* ; *De Infelicitate Principum*, *De Varietate Fortunæ* &c., particularly estimable, on account of the erudition they contain. Since the days of Poggio, morality and metaphysics have made great progress : the human heart and intellect have been more analyzed ; and what in his works are nothing more than lines marked imperfectly, and faintly coloured, are become, in our days, perfect pictures. The treatise upon the ancient edifices of Rome, which were then about excavating from the ruins, is greatly to be applauded.

The Florentine history, however, is his most interesting work. It is an history, for the greater part, of his own times ; since, after rapidly passing over the first events of Florence, he fixes his attention to writing all the occurrences in detail in eight books, for nearly a whole

* Apost. Zeno.

century, from 1350 to 1455 : a great poet has charged him with evincing an undue partiality for his native country in this history ; but he is the first who makes this accusation, and is encouraged, probably somewhat thereto, from the wish to write an epigram*. That part exactly which contains the facts, to which he has been cotemporary in the maturity of his age and intellect, may be considered as a continuation of that of Leonard the Aretine, which does not go beyond, as we have observed, the year 1404. He writes with the style usual in his age, a style which is not very different from that of the Aretine. This history was studied by Poggio in the latter periods of his life, which lasted nearly eighty years, in those hours of rural leisure, which he spent so agreeably in a villa near Florence, whenever his employment permitted him.

His facetious tales have very much scandalized moral persons, since they contain neither polite salt, nor decent jokes; but details which are vulgarly gross, and in which, whether fictitious or real, the names of the actors were not even concealed. This error is, in part, somewhat lessened, as we remark that, in some manuscripts, many of those more indecent details are omitted ; we may consequently imagine that they have been added in the print from the malice of others, who wished either to discredit the author, or give greater credit to the book by affixing his name to them.

We cannot greatly praise his character. He frequently made use of that slander and petulant incivility which dishonour letters, and which were so common to the learned of those times. Many of them, such as

* Sannazz. Carm :

Dum patriam laudat, damnat dum Poggium hostem,
Nec malus est civis, nec bonus historicus.

Poggio, Filelfo, George of Trebisonda, and Valla, have frequently ill-treated, and used towards each other the grossest incivilities. Poggio was not inferior to any in this way, and spared not even the most respectable persons, as he did in his dialogue against the hypocrites, in which the very saints are not secure from his satiric scourge. The asperity and fury of his invectives against Valla, Filelfo, George of Trebisonda, the Antipope Felix, Nicholas Perotti, and many others, exceed the bounds of all decency, and the questions were sometimes the most futile*.

The shades of Cæsar and of Scipio would have smiled, could they have listened to Poggio and Guarini growing so warm upon the question, which of those two warriors was the greatest. From erudite insolence upon paper, and coarseness in words, those learned men sometimes proceeded even to blows, and Giorgio and Poggio fought a comic duel by boxing and fisting each other. The public, indeed, must have held letters in the greatest esteem, not to lose all respect for such literati. But such, we must confess, is the malignity of the human heart, that men, who see themselves so much humbled by superior talents, more readily pardon them for the ridiculous actions which reduce them, nay sometimes degrade them below the common level, which affords a tacit consolation to humbled ignorance †.

If these men were protected by the House of Medicis, the two we are about to mention were indebted to it for

* It was the case of which Horace speaks :

Alter rixatur de lana sæpe caprina,
Ambigitur quid enim Castor sciatur, an docilis plus
Brundusium Numici melior via ducat, an Appi.

† Apos. Zeno, Diss. Voss.

every thing ; viz., Christopher Landino and Bartholomew Scala. The former was born in Florence of a Casentine family, of Prato Vecchio, in the year 1434 ; a place which, since, past ages had been rendered illustrious by men celebrated in arms, in letters, and arts, amongst whom it is necessary to mention three who gained great honour and reputation in three different occupations. Landino, who signalized himself so much in the battle of Campaldino, and in the following century ; James, a painter in his times of the highest repute, and his son Francis, who, although he was blind almost from his cradle, became a poet, but was most particularly skilful in vocal and instrumental music, which excited the astonishment of Venice, and for which he was crowned with laurel in that city by the King of Cyprus*. Our Landino being intended for the study of law, but inclined by genius to Belles Lettres, was enabled to satisfy this passion by the favour and protection he enjoyed from Cosmo de Medicis. He was at once a poet, philosopher, a Greek scholar, a literato, and occupied the chair of Belles Lettres in Florence with the greatest reputation. The learning he possessed, and the capacity he displayed for teaching, are attested by a long catalogue of the most learned men of that age who were his scholars, an ornament which is increased by the names of Lorenzo and Julius de Medicis and Poliziano†.

His Latin poetry, entitled from the name of his mistress, *Xandra*, much of which is published, and much still inedited, and to be found in the Laurentian library, constitutes him one of the best poets of his time, although

* Bandini, Spec. Litterat. Floren. vol. 1.

† This catalogue may be read in Bandini.

a partiality for a great Ovidian facility has made him sometimes neglect the force of that author*. He was a follower of the Platonic philosophy, which had become so much the fashion, particularly in Florence, for the taste the family of Medicis had taken for it; and from the friendship he enjoyed with Marsilio Ficino, he became one of the most active members of the academy, of which we shall have to speak.

Amongst his moral works, the Camaldoiese Disputations, which were written after the year 1468, hold a distinguished place, both on account of the actors who are celebrated, and the matters which are treated of therein. The author, imagining that the two brothers Medicis, Lorenzo and Julius, made an excursion to Camaldoli from one of their villas in the Casentino, caused various learned men to be present there, such as Alamanno Rinuccini, Piero and Donato Acciajoli, together with one of the most rare of all. Leon Baptist Alberti. Imitating the philosophic style which was in vogue in the disputes held in Greece or in Rome, moral questions were discussed either amid the groves of the academy, or in a wood near a fountain upon the Tuscan hills; and if the arguments and the style therein adopted rival not the originals the author has undertaken to imitate, we nevertheless discover the excellent method of study which was then pursued in Florence. This work, however, is rather held in remembrance from the reputation it enjoys than read at present.

The dialogues are divided into four days: the first

* Even in his own times, he was accused of this defect by those who most esteemed him.—See Ugolino Verini de Illustrat. Urbis Floren.; where an eulogy is made of Landino, who however finishes,

*Ah nimis ingenio frætus, longeque laboris
Pertæsus limæ: non omnia possumus omnes*

upon active and contemplative life, although tinctured with the dark metaphysics of the age, is the most delightful, because adorned with interesting historical facts; the second has the highest good, or that felicity for its object, which may be called the philosophical stone of moralists; the third and the fourth cannot afford much delight to moderns.

The author wishes to persuade us, by the mouth of Alberti, that all the events related in the *Æneid* are allegories, all a symbol which indicates the vices and the virtues, and what we have either to avoid or to embrace in human life. Venus is the divine love, or the Creator and Preserver of all things. *Æneas*, having saved himself with this leader from the conflagration of Troy, that is, from the ardour of corporeal voluptuousness, arrives in Italy, or at the seat of True Wisdom. Nothing is more fallacious than to give those intentions to the poet. The moral to be taken from the *Æneid* cannot be different from that which Horace draws from the *Iliad* in the Epistle to *Lollius*, viz., the contemplation of the vices and the follies of the powerful, and the effects of their passions, which are so pernicious to the people; all the rest is a dream. But the mania had arisen in Italy of discovering moral truths under the most indifferent details, and imagining them to be symbols, under the veil of which wonderful mysteries were concealed; and Maro, and particularly Boccaccio and Ariosto, would have smiled to see their less decent tales transformed into lessons of rigid morality.

Landino, who was so rich in a fund of erudition, was a commentator of Horace and of Virgil*, but the com-

* See the very elegant Ode by Poliziano, prefixed to the Horatian Commentary, in which the praises of the poet are genteelly interwoven with those of the commentator.

mentary particularly mentioned, is that upon the poem of Dante. It is true that he has profited of the labours of those who preceded him; it is true that the commentary is too diffuse; but he has illustrated passages which were before him but little understood, and the superabundance of historical knowledge with which he has loaded it, may be pardoned from the taste of the age, the celebrity of the poem, and the importance given to such a work. This commentary, printed with all magnificence and exactness, and dedicated to the Florentine republic*, awakened again the remembrance of that great fellow-citizen, and the wrongs he had suffered. The imagination of Marsilio Ficino grew so warm, that it induced him to write a poetic prose, in which he describes Mercury under the form of Landino, leading back the shade of the poet to his native country, and crowning it. Dante predicted to himself such a fate†, which he never obtained but in the enthusiastic letter of Ficino‡, or in the steril proposal, never carried into effect by the community of Florence, of raising to him a splendid mausoleum, and laying his bones in it. The description of Ficino is full of poetic fire. The shade of the poet is received with tender joy by the mother: in their meeting, the writer has very properly inserted verses placed by Virgil in the mouth of Anchises upon

* This is the famous edition made by Nicholas Lorenzo della Magne in Florence, published 30th of August, 1481. The copy presented by Landino to the Florentine senate, is still preserved in the Magliabecchian library in parchment magnificently bound, and adorned with the arms of the republic.

† Parad. c. 25.

‡ Epist. book 6. Some have falsely believed to be true what is only an imagination of Ficino, that the statue of Dante was really crowned.

receiving *Æneas* in the Elysian fields, which probably the angry shade of the poet would not have listened to. Dante died in exile and miserable. His commentator was rewarded for this work with a palace by the republic, situated at *Borgo alla Collina* in *Casentino*. He wrote many other works of less note. Being of a mild character, and most beloved by the family of the Medicis, he, as many other learned men had been, became secretary of the Florentine republic. In his advanced years, in the year 1497, government exonerated him from so important a charge. He then willingly took his departure from a city, a prey to dissensions, and where he heard curses pronounced upon the names of his benefactors, who were expelled from it. He retired to the palace in *Casentino*, which had been made a present to him, where he closed the placid evening of his life in the midst of the delights of learning, in the year 1504, and about the eighty-first year of* his age.

* His body is still to be seen in an uncorrupted state at *Borgo alla Collina*, and may be said to be the best preserved of any in Europe. What excites our astonishment most, is, that it has remained uncorrupted, in spite of the negligence in which it is kept, being placed in an old wooden box, which is opened to all curious travellers: it has met with some strange dilapidations. Captain *Giavignani*, a *Bolognese*, took two teeth away from it in the year 1632, which he preserved as a relique, whence the cheek is fallen in on that side.

After undergoing some other changes, a respectable Spanish personage, *Monsigniore*, afterwards cardinal *Despuig*, protector of sciences, letters and fine arts, travelling through Tuscany, saw and had compassion upon that illustrious defunct, and chose to give him the honour of a burial: he ordered a decent sepulchre to be made of white marble of *Carrara*, with the portrait of *Landino*, and causing it to be taken to *Borgo alla Collina*, the body was placed in it with the following inscription, which points out all the qualities of *Landino*:

Di *Dante*, di *Maron*, del *Venusino*
Quei che seppe spiegar gli alti pensieri,

Miralto,

The illustrious orators of the Camaldoiese disputations deserve that we should say a word of them. Alamanno Rinuccini is mentioned among the learned men of his age. He was a member of the Platonic academy, one of the reformers of the colleges of Pisa and Florence, and was raised to the first honours of his country, not only without becoming vain of them, but on the contrary chose to show the world in what little estimation he held fame, honours and grandeur, by adopting the motto taken from a medal with a Chimera, and the epigraph *humana cuncta sic vana**.

Donato Acciajoli, a learned Grecian scholar, and translator of various works from the Greek, and of the history of Leonardo Bruni from the Latin, occupied himself with equal success in literature, and in the public affairs of his country, for which he undertook various embassies, in the last of which he died in an honourable poverty. The republic decreed that a dowry should be paid to his daughters, and care taken of his sons. We recognise the abilities he possessed, both as a learned man and a statesman, in his having been elected one of the deputies to the college of Pisa, and one of the reformers of the Florentine code. He was attached to the family of

Miralo, passeggiere, questi è Landino.
 D'Ovidio imitò i vezzi lusinghieri
 Spirò nel gran Lorenzo estro divino :
 Dopo tre scorsi omai secoli interi
 Incorrotto lo miri ; anche il suo frale
 Par che Natura reso abbia immortale.

He who knew so well how to explain the lofty ideas of Dante, of Maro, of Venusino, view him, passenger ; this is Landino. He imitated the flattering graces of Ovid, inspired the great Lorenzo with a divine fire : view him uncorrupted, after the lapse of three entire ages ; nature appears even to have rendered his frailty immortal.

* Series of portraits, &c.

the Medicis, and was the author of the decree, by which Cosmo was called father of his country*. We have already spoken of Alberti in his proper place.

Bartholomew Scala obtained greater honours and riches than Landino under the auspices of the Medicis. He was son of a miller of Colle, in the vale of Elsa, and arrived at the first dignities in Florence. He came to the city when a young man, to cultivate his studies, and as the means failed him, Cosmo and Piero furnished him amply with them. He was a fellow scholar in the same city with James Ammanati, who became afterwards cardinal, but was also at that time oppressed with poverty.

Scala advanced in his studies under the protection, and in the house of the Medicis, who opened to him the road to fortune. He acquired both honours and riches, and was reckoned among the first citizens of the state, became chancellor of the republic, and arrived even at the first of dignities, that of *gonfaloniere*. Innocent VIII, to whom, when he was ambassador, he recited an elegant oration, rewarded him by creating him a chevalier and apostolic secretary. He was learned, although probably not equal to the literati we have hitherto mentioned: he has written poetry and apollogues, both of which are inedited†. Besides the orations, his history of Florence is his most important work. It was designed to consist of twenty books; but he wrote only five. Being chancellor at the time of the conspiracy of the Pazzi, he compiled the narration thereof with precision and energy, in order that it might be laid before the eyes of princes and nations, that they might

* Series of original portraits of the family Acciajoli.

† They are united with those of Alberti in the Ricciardiana.

ascertain at once the atrocity of the crime, and the innocence of the family of the Medicis*.

Scala had the misfortune to incur the displeasure of the first man of his age, Poliziano. Lorenzo de Medicis, who was capable of judging of men of learning far better than his father and grandfather, although he loved and honoured Scala, wished that the style adopted by the Florentine republic, in which so much Latin elegance reigned, should not do any dishonour to its celebrity, and secretly caused the public letters, written by Scala, to be revised by Poliziano. Some corrections being proposed by Lorenzo, made Scala suspect the true author; and elegant disputes arose, in which Scala may be said to have been really a pigmy fighting with a giant. The jealousy of Poliziano for the beautiful Alexandra, daughter of Scala, probably exasperated their minds. This lady deserves, alike with her father, to be honourably mentioned. She united, with the graces of countenance, the finest gifts of a mind adorned by the learning of her age; she was dear to the muses, and some Greek epigrams, written by her, indicate the possession she had of the language; the epigrams, Poliziano has not disdained to insert by the side of his own. He is said to have been the lover of that learned beauty: but neither his character nor his countenance were fitted to captivate the fair sex. Alexandra was married to the poet Tarullo Tarcagnota, as inferior to Poliziano in learning, as he was superior in pleasing qualities. Poliziano became the enemy of the father and husband, and frequently vented his rage in bitter iambics.

Gianozzo Manetti, however, was rivalled by few, and

* Fabb. Life of Lorenzo the Magnificent, t. 2, notes.

surpassed by none, in skill in languages, which formed the principal glory of this epoch. Born in Florence, at the close of the fifteenth century, of an ancient and noble family, he was intended by his father for commerce, and was instructed in the early years of his life only in mercantile arithmetic. He had no other books in his hands than those of bankers, but, nevertheless, devoted his time to letters whenever he could, which is a new proof that nature always predominates over every obstacle in the inclinations of youth.

The literary meetings held in the convent of the Holy Ghost; meetings which are the first embryo of academies in Europe, served Giannozzo as a spur to study. He was a scholar in the Greek of Ambrogio the Camaldoiese. It was a very common thing at that time to be learned in the Greek and Latin languages. Giannozzo, besides possessing a thorough knowledge of these two, chose to learn the Hebrew also. The singular method he followed, shews us the lively passion he entertained for such studies, since, after he had obtained a sufficient acquaintance with the Greek and Hebrew, he called two Greeks and a learned Hebrew to live in his house; and by keeping their society, he made them converse with him always either in Greek or in Hebrew. So great was the ardour he evinced for letters, that his biographer attests that, living near the convent of the Holy Ghost (*Santo Spirito*) for about nine years, he never passed any of the bridges, in order not to lose too much time, the whole of which he devoted to application*.

Giannozzo, since Greek and Latin were very common, acquired his greater celebrity in the Hebrew, and proved

* Naldi Nald. *Vita Jann.*

that he deserved it. In a dispute about religion, held before Sigismund Malatesta, Signor of Rimini, where the most learned Hebrews were assembled, Manetti, upon their arrogantly asserting that the apparent weakness of their proofs proceeded from the adulteration of the genuine sentiments of the Holy Scriptures, in the translation of that book, opposed them, examined the texts and the translation, with the profound knowledge he possessed of that language, and at once confuted and brought them to silence. He afterwards translated the whole of the Psalms from the original Hebrew, and upon some persons reprimanding him for this useless labour, as there were already the versions of Saint Jerome, and Settanta, Manetti wrote in three columns; in the first the translation of Settanta, in the second that of St. Jerome, in the third his own, in order that the difference might be seen. We are certain that so intelligent a man would not have taken this trouble, without having made his own translation very exact; but a veneration for antiquity, and for the authority of the saints, caused the old one to be preferred; consequently, this work, which cost so much labour, and was addressed to King Alphonso, has, together with the defence made of it, never seen the light, and is probably lost. His book also, in confutation of Judaism, remains still buried in the Laurentian library.

These sacred studies, and the reading of the works of S. Augustin, made him a theologer, and those of Aristotle, a philosopher after the fashion of the age. He considered those two men the first the world had ever seen: he had the whole work *De Civitate Dei* of the former by heart, as well as all the ethics of the latter, and the Epistles of St. Paul, and asserted that theology ought to be the principal science of mankind.

He nevertheless neglected not geometry, in which he was skilled above every other man in his country, where he was also a professor, and explained the ethics of Aristotle.

We must look upon Manetti with the consideration due to a great literato. He was, however, one of the citizens, who were most active and serviceable to the government of Florence. The services he rendered, and the abilities he displayed, either as ambassador to the popes, to the Venetian republic, to the King of Naples, &c., the offices he held in the first magistracies of Florence, either as mayor, (*potestā*), at Pescia, Pistoia, Scarperia, where he acted with the utmost integrity and disinterestedness, make us admire him as a man of the greatest virtue; the more so, as in every situation he not only refused the usual presents, but made use of the wisest means to quell discords and unite minds, by not disdaining even to visit the peasantry in the Mugello, in their habitations, to preach to them concord and peace.

The many great services, however, he rendered to his country, were not sufficient to save him from persecution: on the contrary, they excited envy against him. This is a mote or stain in the character of the great Cosmo de Medicis, who then governed the republic, and who is therefore considered as the author of the misfortunes of Manetti. The latter, probably, paid not that deference which Cosmo received from others; he sometimes, probably, replied to him in that tone of firmness, dictated by truth and integrity of heart, which the great, who are spoiled by adulation, are wont to call insolence*. He was persecuted, and took refuge

* Naldi Nald. Vita Jann.

in Rome, under the learned and amiable Pontiff Nicholas V., from whom he received the greatest support. Envy, discontented at seeing him thus tranquil and honoured, obliged him to return to Florence, to be subjected to fresh torments. The prudent pontiff, in order to save him from the rage of his enemies, clothed him with the character of an ambassador; but Manetti, upon arriving in the city, spoke with so much truth and eloquence of his innocence, and the wrongs he had received from others, that the citizens were put to shame, and wished to evince towards him their repentance, by conferring upon him one of the first honours of the state, and creating him one of the council of ten.

Manetti refused not this office; but, when the period of its fulfilment had expired, knowing that envy was not yet appeased, he returned to the learned pontiff, who appointed him his secretary, and affixed to the appointment a liberal stipend. Upon the death of Nicholas he was confirmed in the same situation by Calistus III.; but, as he probably expected not to find in him another Nicholas V.* he directed himself towards Naples, where a sovereign, who was celebrated for his military valour, at once loved and patronised letters. Alphonso made him his counsellor, gave him liberal assignments, and treated him rather as his friend, than his sovereign. He died in peace in that city, in the year 1459. His works, besides those we have mentioned, are very numerous. He has written the History of the city of Pistoia, the Life of his protector, Nicholas V., and that of the three great luminaries of Italian literature, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, besides various ora-

* It is said, in the series of portraits, that he held the same employment too under Pius II.

tions and other erudite and moral works; amongst which is *The Dignity and Excellence of Man; (Della dignità ed eccellenza dell'uomo)**.

Matthew Palmieri was born of an ancient and illustrious family in Florence, in the year 1405. He received his Greek and Latin education from Charles the Aretine, and Ambrogio the Camaldoiese, and became one of the learned men of his age. He was employed as ambassador by his native country to various popes, to King Alphonso of Naples, &c. He was an historian, an orator, and a poet, and has written a chronology of the creation of the world, of which, however, only a part has come to light. This part, however, from the year 447 to 1449 †, is the most important, and is considered a very authentic narration of the events of his own times. In his work *De Captivitate Pisarum*, Palmieri appears to have followed the Italian narration of Capponi, and to have imparted only a greater elegance to those details. The life of Nicholas Acciajoli, grand marshal of the kingdom of Naples, is more interesting ‡. He was also an Italian writer both in verse and in prose. His poem in terzin rhyme, entitled "The City of Life," (La Città di Vita,) which has never been published with the prints, suffered various vicissitudes. It received both great applause and great censure. Some persons, and particularly Marsilio Ficino, made high encomiums upon it, and considered the author not only as a great poet, but as a profound theologian; whilst others considered him little less than a heretic, on account of some singular novelties he has dispersed in it. He asserted, that the

* Naldus Naldi, *Rerum Ital. Scrip.* tom. 20. Jac. Gaddi, *Elog. Series of Portraits, &c.* In the first is found the note of his works.

† *Scrip. Rer. Ital. Florentiæ*, tom. 1.

‡ *Murat. Rer. Ital. Scrip.* tom. 18. and 19..

souls of men are the same as those of the angels who remained neutral in the rebellion against God, and received the prison of mortal life for their punishment.

His dialogue of civil life would probably have met with a similar fate, if it had been examined by theologians with the same scrupulous diffidence, since we find an opinion therein which would not have escaped censure. He supposes in that book that the poet Dante, who was in the battle of Campaldino, where he gained so much honour, seeking for a friend upon the field of battle, whom he feared to be slain, saw the body rise and speak to him, relating to the condition and destiny of the dead. He says that the souls of great and virtuous men, and of heroes who have served their country, although dying without baptism, are not condemned to hell*, but there is a space beyond the lunar heaven, inhabited by them: a thought similar to that which Lucan has expressed with so much sublimity of style in his *Pharsalia*, where he makes the shade of Pompey rise in that sojourn of the blessed †.

* For such an opinion, which was written in the book *de Incognitis*, Galeotto Marzio of Narni, was accused in Venice in the year 1477, and condemned to be taken to the square upon a scaffold with a crown of devils upon his head, where the sentence was read to him, and the book burnt in his face.—Sanud. *Rer. Ital. Scrip.* tom. 22. page 1206.

† At non in Pharia manes jacuere favilla,
Nec cinis exiguis tantam conpescuit umbram;
Prosiluit busto, semustaque membra relinquens,
Degeneremque rogum, sequitur convexa Tonantis
Quæ niger astriferis connectitur axibus Aër,
Quodque patet terras inter, Lunæque meatus
Semidei manes habitant, quos ignea virtus
Innocuos vitæ patientis ætheris imi
Fecit et æternos animam collegit in orbes:
Non illuc auro positi nec thure sepulti

He held the first employments of the republic, and was charged with important embassies. He had attended the funeral obsequies paid to his master, Charles the Aretine, where he recited publickly his praises. He received, himself, the same solemn eulogy from Alamanno Rinuccini, when he died at the age of seventy years*.

The chronology of our author was continued by another Matthew Palmieri, a Pisan, who brought it down to the year 1482. He too was well versed in the Greek and Latin languages, a proof of which we find in the translations he made both of Aristotle and the history of Herodotus; translations now forgotten, because they have given place to the more exact ones, which posterity have come into possession of from the continual increase of knowledge. Those persons, however, who, by marking out the first laborious traces, have smoothed the road to others, are always to be venerated. He was apostolic secretary in Rome, was beloved by the Medicis, who always considered the love of letters a sufficient privilege for learned men to possess their favour.

Sienna produced in this age an *Æneas Silvius Piccolomini*, who afterwards became Pope Pius II., one of the most respectable men both for the sublime posts to which he attained, and the learning he possessed. He was born in 1404, in the town of Corsiniano, which was afterwards ennobled, and called Pienza, from his pontifical name, and elevated to the rank of cities. He passed through his first studies in literature and sciences in the university of Sienna, in which he greatly distinguished

Pervenirent: illic postquam se lumine vero
Implevit, stellasque vagas miratur et astra
Fixa polis, vedit quanta sub nocta jaceret
Nostra dies, veditque sui Iudibria trunc.

* Apost. Zeno, &c

himself*. Being not very easy in pecuniary circumstances, he served the cardinal Domenico Capranica, and went with him to the council of Basle, in which he displayed the first rays of his learning. He was secretary to various bishops and cardinals, and even to the emperor Sigismund III. Eugene IV. created him Bishop of Trieste ; Nicholas V., of Sienna ; Calistus III., a cardinal. Although he was a very learned man, his political is more interesting to us than his literary life. It would be at once useless and tedious to follow him through all the offices he filled, and the political events he met with, in the travels which he undertook, either for his own pleasure or in the service of princes, and particularly of the popes, as there was scarce a province of Europe into which he did not penetrate, and went even into Scotland, which was a country at that time almost unknown to travellers. Able in the management of the most delicate affairs, few there were which he brought not to a happy termination.

He arrived finally at the summit of honours, at the pope's diadem ; exercised that charge at once with a nobleness of mind, with disinterestedness and zeal for religion ; and when the finest provinces of Europe and Italy herself, were threatened by the Ottomans, he died amid the distresses of body and mind which he exposed himself to, in collecting the forces of the Christian powers against the common enemy. The activity of his mind is more strongly displayed when we consider how much he has written amidst the distractions of so many important affairs. His historical comments in twelve books are the principal of his works, in which the events of Italy, of his times, are described. As he was himself

* Filelfo boasts of having been his master. Epist. lib. 26. to Leond. Cribre.

one of the principal actors in these events, and especially in the latter years, the history becomes very interesting, particularly of his own pontificate, the occurrences of which are described down to the last year. The style possesses sufficient elegance, is not deficient in strength, and is embellished with those reflections which might be particularly indulged in by a man like himself, who had become acquainted with the principal courts of Europe, and had studied men in their actions more than in books. As he speaks much of himself, (and he could not do less, being one of the principal parties in the events detailed,) he thought proper to prefix another name to the work, that of John Gobellino, his secretary ; but all the writers of that age leave no doubt of the real author, although the work was not published till more than a century after his death.

Besides this work he has given us many histories, particularly of Germany : the long sojourn he made in that country, furnished him with an opportunity of acquiring knowledge, and his active mind never lost itself amidst the indulgences of idleness. The history of the council of Basle is not very favourable to Pope Eugene IV. He followed at that time the party of the fathers of the council, who had declared themselves against that pontiff. He retracted afterwards ; but this history remained, and was greedily read and published by the protestants, who considered that they discovered therein new proofs in favour of their sentiments.

His works, both great and small, are so numerous, that it would be tedious to give an account of them all, and the catalogue of them may be read from his biographers *. Among the latter are some very singular, such as the

* Apost. Zeno. Disser. Voss.

treatise upon the *Misery of Courtiers*, (*Miseria de' Cortigiani*.) As he was first a courtier, and afterwards a prince, he must have had a profound knowledge of the subject he treated.

The letter to Mahomet II., in which he endeavours to convert him to the christian religion, is still more singular. If he wrote it in the hope of persuading him, and has not adopted that theme rather to exercise his genius and eloquence, and demonstrate the truth of the religion, we must consider him as a man of little intelligence in political affairs. The Latin romance of the Loves of Lucretia and Euryalus*, and the description of the beauties of Lucretia are a proof of his poetic fancy; but, if we are to excuse him for such a production on account of his youth, the gravity becoming ecclesiastical employments should rather have rejected it than offer a useless antidote†. It would have been better either to have burnt that little book, which the rising art of printing had not yet multiplied, or to have rejected it as an improper one; but although the words, written when pontiff, condemn him, they still induce us to be complacent towards the author, on account of the skill he has displayed. His eagerness of fame as an author

* It may be conjectured, from the Epistle to Gasparo Schlick, imperial chancellor, that he was the Euryalus. There are many mistakes in various authors. Marco Guazzo, quoted by Certari, (*Sillab. Adroc.*) says, that Æneas Silvius wrote the History of Paris and Vienna, and dedicated it to Mariano Soccino. Manni (*History of the Decameron*) asserts, that Pius denies having written that history in the epistle 395. In this letter he speaks of the History of Lucretia and Euryalus, which is that he dedicated to Soccino; denies not having written it, but repents of it. With the repentance is united an Elegy, in which he describes the prejudicial qualities of love.

† *Antidotum ad Præcedentem Historiam*: the writer was not so young, having written it at forty years of age.

prevailed over every other consideration: herein he was like to Heliodorus, Bishop of Tricca, in Thessalia, who chose rather to renounce his bishopric than the elegant romance of Chariclea and Theagenes. He cultivated the Muses, also; and was held in such high esteem, that he earned the poetic crown from the Emperor Frederick *.

The Cardinal James Ammanati continued the Commentaries of Pius. Born of an humble family in the country, between Lucca and Pistoia, he passed his first studies in poverty, together with Scala in Florence †. He afterwards proceeded to Rome, where he struggled a considerable time with misery. Calistus III. chose him for his apostolic secretary; but Pius II. entertained a particular predilection for him, made him assume his surname, created him Bishop of Pavia in 1460, and afterwards cardinal. The Commentaries of Pius, which terminated at 1464, were continued by him to 1469. There are many letters printed with those commentaries, adapted to elucidate the history of the times. He met his death by a strange accident: after taking a too copious dose of hellebore, as a cure for the quartan ague, he fell into a profound sleep, and died in a few hours ‡.

† Bernard Oricellario, or Rucellai, of a highly respectable family, which has given Florence so many statesmen and men of letters, was born in the year 1449. He was the son of John and Janet Strozzi, daughter of the celebrated Pallas, and had the honour of having Cosmo, father of his country, for his godfather. Commerce, which constituted the riches and the strength of Florence, being carried on by the first families, rendered the house of Rucellai one of the greatest. Bernard was very

* Menken. Script. Germ. vol. 3. † Scalæ Epist. 438 et 473.

‡ Jacob. Volatern. Vita Amm.

rich, and both magnificent and generous. These qualities were displayed in his nuptial ceremony with Jane of the Medicis, sister of Lorenzo the Magnificent, whom he married at the early age of seventeen*. The instances have been rare of any country like Florence, whose merchants, although devoted to the pursuit of gain, have, at the same time, both esteemed and cultivated literature. It becomes our duty to make an honourable mention of this for the glory of the city. The Medicis set not, but followed, the example. Bernard was both a merchant, a literato, and a public man; he filled the first offices in his native country, and enjoyed the fame of the greatest integrity of character. He was gonfaloniere and ambassador at various times to kings, popes, and republics. Although he was nearly related to the Medicis, he was not of their party†; but here he is interesting to us only as a cultivator of letters.

His History of the Italian War, wherein he describes the invasion of Charles VIII., and the disasters of the Florentines, is highly authentic, because it was written by a man who was, in great part, an ocular witness of the events he describes. The style acquires from his pen a force, which, since the revival of letters, history had not yet arrived at. Whoever cannot rest satisfied with his own opinion may place all confidence in Erasmus, who calls Bernard another Sallust†.

These two literati formed an acquaintance in Venice upon first sight of each other. Erasmus understood not the Italian language—and Bernard, although so polished a Latin writer, could not be induced to hold a dialogue in

* It was said, that he spent 37,000 florins in gold, an exorbitant sum for that time.

† See Beccucci *Rerum Ital. Scrip. Flor.* tom. 2, &c. &c.

‡ *Eras. Oper. vol. 4. Apoph. book 8.*

this tongue; either that Erasmus re-awakened in him a reverent fear, or that, being unaccustomed to speak Latin, and to write from reflection, he could not get over the little disgust at making use of expressions and phrases which elegance cannot entirely approve of, and which cannot be avoided in speaking extempore. Thus many great poets could never be induced to make extempore verses.

The illustration of Rome by Bernard is a work of great merit: he has, indeed, commented on Publius Victor; but the choice erudition with which he has embellished his commentary, the passages of ancient authors united so à-propos to depict the majestic buildings of ancient Rome, are a kind of ornament which eclipse even the original. This work was addressed by him to his son Pallas, in order to invite him to elegant studies, by imitating the father of Roman eloquence, who, whilst his son was attending in Athens to moral philosophy, addressed to him a treatise thereon, far superior to all that the schools of Athens could produce at that time.

Bernard was the author of various little works of erudition and history. He disdained not the Italian muse; and among the songs consecrated by the Florentines to joy and bacchanalian liberty, we find the Triumph of Calumny written by him*. At once a friend and liberal patron of the learned, he imitated the taste and generosity displayed by his brother-in-law, Lorenzo. After his death, he opened the house to the Platonic Academy, and the gardens of Rucellai, celebrated for the learned citizens who assembled therein, awakened in Bernard the idea of the Greek academician †. The family of Rucellai

* Canti Carnascialeschi.

† Atque inter silvas Academi quærere verum.—HOR. Ser.

emulated that of Medicis in splendour and generosity. The father of Bernard had begun to build the Façade of S. Maria Novella, which was finished by the son, and in which he was buried. He died on the 7th of October 1514. When we consider that he was not only opposed to the House of Medicis, but to the gonfaloniere Soderini, an enemy of the Medicean faction, that he changed his party various times, that he refused to go as ambassador to Leo X., we find some foundation for the extravagant character historians have given him *.

Raphael Maffei must be mentioned among the learned Tuscans of this age. He was born in Volterra in the year 1454. He was well versed in the Greek and Latin languages, has written various works, and made translations from the Greek; but the work by which he has rendered himself most celebrated is comprehended in thirty-eight books, entitled *Commentaria Urbana*, and which may be considered as a magazine of interesting knowledge of every kind. Ancient geography, history, illustrious men, both ancient and modern, rudiments of the arts, the scientific knowledge which was current in his times, discoveries made by Spanish and Portuguese navigators, enter into the plan of his work, which was held in the highest repute; and the historical part, which particularly concerns his own times, is still so. Two medals, which were coined in honour of him, are fresh proof of the esteem in which the public held him. He lived, the early part of his life, a courtier under Sixtus IV. with the Cardinal of Arragon, legate at Ferrara; the latter part, as a hermit, in a cell covered with boards,

* Opus, tom. 2.—This character of Bernard Ammirato has taken from the History of Cambi, his contemporary, ann. 1514.

sleeping upon the straw, feeding upon bread and water and a few vegetables. He renounced all profane erudition, and wrote only the lives of saints. He founded and endowed a monastery of nuns, under the title of S. Lino ; was himself regarded as a saint,—and his fellow-citizens, who were capable of appreciating merit of every kind, placed his portrait by the side of that of Persius, although the two men were of so different a character. A satirist by the side of a saint ! They might, however, have some connexion from the rigour of their morals*.

The number of learned Tuscans who flourished in this age, and in this kind of literature, is so great, that they would far exceed the limits of our design, were we to occupy ourselves with all of them. We can, therefore, only give a cursory view of several of them. Bartholomew Fonte was a Florentine, and his annals, printed by Lami, and still in the catalogue of the Ricciardiana, interest the learned above all others. Andrew Fiocesi was a Florentine canon, and wrote of the ancient Roman magistrates, and once had the honour of his book passing for classic, and being attributed to Fenestella †. Ugolino Verini has illustrated the city of Florence with a poem ‡. His son Michael died a young man, of a disease which will be believed by few, and is probably fatal to none §.

* Mazzuech. Scritt. Ital. tom. 2. p. 1. Falconc. Life of Maffei.

† Zeno, Diss. Voss.

‡ He has written another which is inedited, entitled *Paradisus* : therein he imagines himself walking in Paradise with Cosmo, who speaks to him of the affairs of Florence.

§ He is said to have died of too great chastity : the Florentine writers, and the inscription upon his sepulchre in the Holy Ghost, say the same, as well as Poliziano.

Sola Venus poterat lento succurrere morbo :

John Tortelli the Aretine, theologian, grammarian, and Grecian, of high repute, who travelled on purpose into Greece to study profoundly the Greek language, and was one of the most learned men therein at that time. He was an archpriest in Arezzo, and was elected by one of the most learned pontiffs, Nicholas V., keeper of the library which was afterwards called Vatican. Being treated by him as a friend, he might have aspired to the most eminent posts, had not death immaturely cut off his patron *. Scipio Fortiguerrri, Phedras Inghirami, and a hundred others follow, whose lives and writings may be read in the many biographers who have treated of them, since we have no space to enter into details of them.

We have now given a review of a crowd of learned Tuscans, who were historians, commentators, antiquarians, and who made great attainments in the Greek and Latin languages. They drew their treasures of learning from the many new codes which they came into possession of, and, together with the literati of other countries, gave to this age a particular stamp and character, which may be called the age of Greek and Latin erudition. These branches continued constantly refining and purifying themselves as the age advanced, like water, confined in a canal, purifies the more it flows.

A man made his appearance about the middle of this century, who was destined to carry these acquirements to their highest pitch of perfection, and accomplish, as it were, the maturity of the age. This man was Angelo Ambrogini, or Bassi of Montepulciano, better known under the name of Angelo Poliziano. Nature has con-

* Zeno. Diss. Voss. Tortelli wrote a history of medicine, and his orthography has been very useful to Ambrogio Calepino, and Dufresne.

ceded to few men so large a share of talent. She rarely unites a lively fancy to austere judgment, two faculties which frequently are at war with each other, and still more rarely connects the moveable inconstant imagination with that laborious patience which the profound study of languages, and of various erudition, demands.

These two faculties, which are so rare, were found happily united in Angelo, and made him the greatest ornament of his age. His studies, and the means of prosecuting them with facility, his education, all he owed to the generosity of the Medicis, in whose house he was received when almost a boy, and was enabled to drink the purest milk of human learning in this dwelling of the Muses, which was frequented by so many learned men.

He studied the Latin language under Christopher Landino, and the Greek under Argiropolous. The latter was one of those learned Greeks who had taken refuge in Italy: full of arrogance, and having no regard for any writers than those of his own country, he cared not for the Latins, and incited his scholars particularly to despise Cicero, whom he treated as a man ignorant both of Greek literature and philosophy. His scholars, however, among whom were Poliziano, Donato Acciajoli, &c., possessed too good sense to follow the opinions proposed to them by their master.

Poliziano soon took so rapid a flight at a very early age, that he left his masters far behind him. He had scarcely arrived at the years of puberty, when he wrote Greek, Latin, and Italian verses, to which the age knew nothing equal. His Greek epigrams were the astonishment of the learned who frequented the House of Medicis. The Latin elegy upon violets, is one of the most brilliant gems that Catullus would not disdain to acknowledge for his own; and the whole of the fifteenth century boasts

not of a piece of Italian poetry so elegant as his octaves which were written for the tournament of the Medicis.

The finest day corresponded with this morning. At the age of twenty-nine, he was promoted to the chair of Greek and Latin elocution in Florence, a chair that had hitherto been filled by the most mature and most celebrated men in Europe. The fame of his predecessors, instead of prejudicing, assisted, the young professor, who eclipsed them all. They were also profoundly learned, but scantily gifted with that refinement of taste which is so necessary both to feel the beauties of the classics, and make others feel them.

There is a vast difference in literary taste among mankind : a spirited writer compares them with watches *. The rudest mark the hours, a greater art is requisite in the little machine to indicate the minutes, and a still greater delicacy to point out the seconds. The greater part of the learned Grecians were of the first, or at most of the second, class ; Poliziano was of the third. In the explanation he gave of the Greek or Latin classics, he was able to point out their true beauties, because he felt them, and these frequently depend upon very small points. One word rather than another put in its place, accompanied by the epithet the most adapted to the purpose ; a series of images, which succeed each other in one order rather than in another ; and a number of very small but important things, constitute that beauty of style which is to be felt rather than to be explained. This style frequently hangs, to use the phrase, upon very light tints, which are easily lost by a vulgar eye ; and in order to perceive which, a lively imagination and delicate sense become indispensably necessary. They are beauties

* Fonten. Plural. des Mondes.

which the vulgar herd of interpreters, intent only upon erudition, suffer to escape them ; they resemble the powder of the wings of butterflies, which handled coarsely, is lost without being seen.

That Poliziano possessed an exquisite sense of the beautiful, is proved by his writings, wherein he so happily imitated the beauties of the classics that he vied with the originals. We are not, therefore, to wonder at the extraordinary celebrity his school attained, and at the crowd of respectable scholars, Italians, and foreigners, with which it abounded*. English, German, and Portuguese, hastened to it, among whom must be mentioned, William Grose, an Englishman, who, afterwards carrying to his native land the acquirements he had made in the school of Poliziano, diffused them from the chair of the university of Oxford ; Thomas Linacre of Canterbury ; Dioniges Reuclin ; two sons of John Tessira, chancellor of the King of Portugal, of the progress made by whom he himself gave so good account in the letters he wrote to the king and the father ; Ermico Cajado a Portuguese, who went purposely to hear Poliziano, and who acquired great reputation by his poems which were printed in Bologna, and there gave proofs of the advantage he had derived in Italy. The illustrious Pico della Mirandola himself disdained not frequently to place himself among his scholars.

In the mean time Poliziano not only sustained, but increased, his reputation by his works. The translations he made of so many Greek writers, besides the precise intelligence contained in the text, are written with that elegance to which, till now, the age had not arrived. Other translators, like mechanical copyists of

* Consult his Epistle 1 of book 9.

excellent paintings, only transported upon the canvass the most necessary and principal expressions. Poliziano, besides making use of the true colours, knew how to give figures that soul which the originals breathed. Among the many translations he made of Greek writers both in verse and in prose, it is to be regretted that of the Iliad is lost; since, being made by nature a great poet, a learned and profound connoisseur of the refinements of both languages, he would have shewn to us Homer clothed in Latin garments without the noble poet losing any of his majesty among them *.

The *Miscellanea* is one of the works of Poliziano, in which he has shewn his acuteness of genius, his exquisite taste, joined with the most profound erudition and skill in the classics. He received advice and encouragement for this work from Lorenzo the Magnificent. This great man, who so much delighted in the society of Poliziano, chose to have him with him, particularly when public affairs permitted it in the leisure hours he

* We have the testimony of Alexander Bracci that he had finished it. Besides the many accounts of this translation, he himself notes it in the elegy for the death of the young wife of Sigismund della Stufa, Albiera Albizzi, in these verses :

Ipse ego qui dudum reges magno ore canebam,
Dardanaque Argolica Pergama raptam manu;
Eheu nil dulce sonans taceo jam bella tubasque,
Et rifero ad nigros carmina moesta rogos.

This elegy was written at twenty-three years of age, as will be seen below, whence Poliziano was working upon the translation at that age. From his octaves, too, we infer the same: he suspended the translation in order to write them. See st. 7.

E se quassù la Fama il ver rimbomba
Che d'Ecuba la figlia, ò sacro Achille,
Poiche il Corpo lasciasti entro la Tomba,
T' accenda ancor d' amorose faville,
Lascia tacer un po tua maggior tromba
Ch' io fo squillar per le italiane ville, &c.

passed in his villas, a leisure which was happily filled up with the conversation of the learned. In the rides on horseback, which he frequently took with his friend Poliziano, their discourses turned upon letters. The latter explained to Lorenzo his new ideas upon the interpretation of the classics, upon the illustration of them, and the corrections which he thought necessary to be made. Conversations and ideas like these, to which, probably, this learned man gave not the just value, because whoever is excessively rich cares not about small coin, appeared to Lorenzo, what they really were, new treasures of erudition, and he advised him to publish them. Poliziano obeyed; and thus arose the celebrated *Miscellanea*, in which Lorenzo has some share, not only as promoter, but as author, of the work, on account of the opportune reflections he so frequently suggested*.

The merit of this work, and the fame the author acquired by it, cannot be better proved than by the envy it awakened in his rivals. Unable to diminish its reputation, they had recourse to an expedient, which has been frequently attempted by literary jealousy, by disseminating the report, that the work was not his. Some pretended that the reflections he therein discovers were taken from the cornucopia of Perotti, hitherto not sufficiently known, but which, when afterwards published, has belied every accusation.

George Merula, another learned man, full of that jealousy and uncivil arrogance, which so much demeaned the character of the literati of this age, who

* This testimony, which does so much honour, both to Lorenzo the Magnificent and Poliziano, we have from himself in the preface to the *Miscellany*, in these words: *Quod auxiliarum te, quodque consiliarim habuerunt.*

was in the service of Lewis the Moor, Governor of Milan, attacked the *Miscellany*, by maintaining that many observations therein contained were false, and others taken from his own works; but, as he ventured not to carry on the war in writing, he dispersed those detractions in Milan and the remainder of Italy, which find credulous persons, in all ages, from a certain bad disposition, which unfortunately lurks in the recesses of the human heart, which makes us desire to witness the humiliation of all who are superior to ourselves.

The dispute became delicate, since the two patrons, Lorenzo and Lewis, interested themselves in it. Poliziano, without having recourse to those vulgar insults, with which the literati, for the most part, at that time carried on the war, wrote a judicious letter to Lewis, probably upon the advice given him by Lorenzo, praying him to use his influence, that Merula might publish his accusations. The latter refusing to do so, the dispute was decided against him; and Merula dying not long afterwards, Poliziano again addressed himself to the duke, that the notes of Merula to his *Miscellany* might be published, and had the pleasure to hear they contained nothing important.

Two of the principal statesmen of Italy, who thus disdained not to interest themselves seriously in a literary dispute, as if it were an affair of magnitude, prove beyond any thing we can say the honour it was customary to pay to literature. Poliziano had few rivals in that age, in the interpretation and correction of the classics, and there was indeed great need of his labours. It was necessary to bring the ancient authors, which had passed through the hands of numerous and, frequently, ignorant copyists, to their true standard. Poliziano employed himself with great success therein,

corrected and, at the same time, interpreted. He made the correction of Catullus at the age of eighteen years, and those of Ovid, of Suetonius, Stazius, Pliny the Younger, of Quintilian, of the writers of the Augustan History, bear testimony to the activity and acuteness of his genius.

Nothing proves more the universality of the knowledge he possessed, than the correction of the Pandects. Such a work appeared rather that of a consummate lawyer. Poliziano, with the original code in his hand, and the edition of Venice, of 1485, by confronting them together, not only made corrections, but added very ingenious reflections. The copy, with the marginal notes in the hand of Poliziano, which was once lost, and afterwards found again, is now among the codes of the Laurentian library. Nor was this the only benefit legal science stood indebted to him for. He was the first who discovered and made known to the world the Greek Institutions of Theophilus, which, again lost, were found by Vigilio Zuichemo in the library of the Cardinal Bessarione, and made public*.

We have no common traces of the legal knowledge he possessed, both in his letters and in his miscellany, which make us utter a sigh for all that has been lost of him of this kind. The conspiracy of the Pazzi, sacrilegiously planned against his protectors, gave him the opportunity of shewing his historical talent; which he described immediately after the fact, at the age of twenty-four. The elegance, the clearness and strength, he displays in the work, would lead us to imagine he was at a more advanced age; but nature had matured, more rapidly than usual, the genius of Poliziano. Among

* Menkin. Hist. Vitæ Ang. Pol.

the many describers of that atrocious fact, Poliziano yields only to the great Florentine secretary, who has drawn so masterly a description of it in his history. The former, probably, was not permitted, as an ecclesiastic, to develope its principles, and go down to the pontifical throne as Macchiavel has been able to do*.

This man, therefore, appears before us invested with the merits of a learned man, in the Greek, Latin, Italian, and Hebrew languages; a writer in the three former, superior to the literati of the age, full of erudition, a man of taste, an historian, and a poet. His Latin poetry yields to none, even of the later poets, in the happiness of his fancy, which every where seeks and discovers new images; an example of which we find in the sublime elegy on the death of Albiera Albizzi, the young wife of Sigismund Stufa, who died in her fifteenth year, an elegy written by Poliziano at the age of nineteen, and preferred by Scaligero to that of Ovid or Albinovano, which are addressed to Livia†. He there personifies the malignant fever; and the symptoms of that evil, converted into attributes of the spectre, form an horrible figure, to which the poet addresses the most pathetic prayer, in order to arrest its progress.

No poet of his age understood how to adorn the truth with so much sublimity of images: his four little heroic

* The animosity borne by Michael Bruto against the family of the Medicis went so far as to make him consider this piece of the history of Poliziano as effeminate, puerile, and unworthy of so great a man.—Michael Brut. Hist. Flor.

† His age is inferred from a consolatory letter of Marcus Ficino to the husband, which bears the date of the 1st of August, 1473. Poliziano was born 1454. Albizzi died after the festival of St. John, and the poem of Poliziano could not be written after this year, as it would have been inopportune.

poems, entitled by him, *Groves*, (*Selve*,) are a proof of this. In the first, entitled *Nutricia*, he returns thanks to his elegant nurse, Poetry; describes her as descending from heaven to soften rude men; the harmony of the verses comes from the harmony of the heavens; poetry is the language of gods, who have spoken even in verse in the obscure oracles. Afterwards, all the great poets appear, and the author stops for a moment, doubtful of the two great Greek and Latin epic poets, and knows not how to decide upon their merit*. He goes down to later times, has not omitted Dante and Petrarch; and without fear of being accused of adulation, he was enabled, as he has done, to mention Lorenzo as one of the best poets of the age, whose self-love he flatters in an ingenious trait, by expressing, in as many Latin verses, the various themes of his Italian poetry†. Two other groves, (*Selve*,) *Manto ad Ambra*, are consecrated to these two sublime poets. After having considered Homer as an inspirer of the other poets, who, like a magnet communicating its power to all the iron it touches, kindles the fire of lesser poets, he relates a pretty fable.

The ocean invites the gods to a great banquet. Thetis appears, but grieves for the death of her son, on whose account she can find no peace. Jupiter consoles her by telling her, that a very great poet will be born who will sing the actions of her son, whose fame shall

* After he has spoken of Homer:

Proximus huic autem vel (ni veneranda senectus
Obstiterit) fortasse prior canit arma virumque
Virgilius.

† See Roscoe, Life of Lorenzo, cap. 5. note 92 and 93, in which that author has noted the verses which allude to those themes.

continue to increase by the verses he will write. He then describes the birth of Homer in Smyrna; at his cries the sea becomes calmed; the nymphs receive him in their arms; at the first articulation of his words, the wild beasts, the birds, the plants, move by enchantment, with a thousand other pretty images; and this little poem appears to have been written in the villa of Cajano, as the *Rusticus* was in that of Fiesole. Some persons have thought that Poliziano yields in Latin elegance to Pantano, Sanazzaro, and other later poets. This may be the case if we treat particularly of Virgilian elegance; but in the invention and the images he is, for the most part, superior. Poliziano, intent upon the correction of so many codes, obliged to govern a latinity so varied, has not been able always, like the former, to limit himself to Virgil; but his style probably is on that account more original, while the poems of the former appear sometimes patched garments of the original*. Lorenzo de Medicis could not have chosen for his children a more

* The first Neapolitan literati of those times, and particularly Pontano and Sannazzaro, as is inferred from the invectives, particularly of this latter, declaim against the obscene interpretation made by Poliziano of the *Passere* of Catullus, as false and indecent. Roscoe supposes, in the Life of Leo X., that it proceeded from the intimacy they had with Scala and Marullo, enemies of Poliziano. I do not know if the conjecture be true; the latter despised, as he was wont to do, their mordacity. But there is no piece that can equal the Dialogue of Pontano, called *Charon*, for indecent mordacity and profanation of religious ceremonies. He represents the Stygian pilot receiving passengers in the boat, and interrogating one after the other those who are ecclesiastics. He sees a very fat one, and tells him, *Ad tu, tam nitida cute, atque anatrino gressu, quem profiteris? Episcopum.* Respect for religion and decency does not permit us to mention an *Oremus*, composed by an obscene and wicked priest, who had seduced a simple girl under the mantle of religion.

proper preceptor. Although still young, he wished that they should attend to this man, and that their minds, in expanding by the influence of reason, should find the true light of truth and of taste. Poliziano, with such patrons, could not fail in acquiring honours and riches ; and he, therefore, attained all that he could have wished. He was created a Florentine citizen, became a secular prior of the College of St. Paul, canon of the cathedral, one of the ambassadors of the Florentines to Innocent VIII., and was generously rewarded by him for the translation of *Herodianus*. If death had not cut him short, and the fortunes of the Medicis had not changed, he would probably have been cardinal*. He had the misfortune to see the great patron of letters, Lorenzo, meet an immature death ; and two years afterwards he died himself, at the early age of forty years : probably more happy, because he was not a spectator of the mournful catastrophe which attended the Medicean family, and which happened shortly afterwards. We will not waste time in confuting the many calumnies which have been spread upon the manners he used, and the religion he followed,—calumnies disseminated both by his enemies and the discredited pen of the novelist Varillas. Menkenius and others have sufficiently defended him. Every great man has had detractors. Envy is the inseparable companion of merit ; and the more loud and vociferous the words are which she makes use of, by so much the greater is the effulgence of that merit which torments her. In order to put envy to silence, patience and modesty are requisite. These are virtues with which men of letters frequently are not well

* *Mehus. Præf. ad Ambr. Camald. Fabbr. Vita Laur.* in note.

armed ; since, upon the authority of Flaccus, they think themselves entitled to display a little pride as due to their merit*.

It is necessary to pardon great men something, on account of the sublime productions, of which we should be deprived, if nature had not given them a lively imagination, and consequently an extraordinary sensibility, whence irregularities in moral actions have their origin,—irregularities to which men of middling talent are not subjected, as we have already noted. What we can ill excuse Poliziano for, is having given the wife of his benefactor, Clarice Orsini, so much reason to complain of him, as to request her husband to send him away from the house†. The discreet and generous Lorenzo, who could not deny the wife this satisfaction, conceded to Poliziano an abode in his magnificent villa of Fiesole. We must be indulgent towards the defects in the character of this great man, as well as of all men, applying frequently to them that well known verse of a great modern poet :

Helas ! tous les mortels ont besoin d'indulgence.

It has been said, that the occupation of the learned men of this epoch consisted particularly in Greek and Latin erudition, the interpretation of the classics of both languages, and what is commonly called philology. The greatest geniuses applied themselves successfully to few other objects ; and Poliziano may be said to have crowned the age by carrying this study to the highest possible per-

* Quæsitam meritis sume superbiam.

† See the Letter of Clarice to Lorenzo : Fabbr. Vita Laur. in note. For the Life and Writings of Poliziano Menkenius, in his History of the Life of Ang. Poliz, and the various Florentine writers, and even Tiraboschi, History of Italian Literature, may be consulted.

fection. It is true that in our times, in which the objects of study are so greatly varied, when mathematics and researches upon natural effects engross so particularly the attention of mankind, the just value is not set upon those acquirements; nor are the long watchings, the tedious labours, of those who have rendered smooth to us the thorny paths, and have, as it were, sacrificed themselves to the patience necessary for interpretations, the compilation of lexicons*, of grammars, &c., sufficiently apprized. They enjoy the fruits without being very grateful to their benefactors; but let us transport ourselves for a moment to early times, in which so many aids were wanting to understand the classics, and we shall see what an enormous labour has been undertaken by our predecessors. We shall perceive the necessity of a most extensive reading and erudition, in order to interpret one writer with another, sometimes a poet with an orator, an orator with a comedian, and extract knowledge from a neglected book, from a medal, from an inscription adapted to elucidate an historian or a poet; and by thus forcing a way through the most thorny paths, place the classics in the perspicuous situation in which they now are, and make them read without costing great labour. The greater part of this labour has been gone through precisely in this epoch, or at least the materials most important for completing it were prepared. The discovery of so many codes induced literati necessarily to devote their attention to this study, which became the fashion; and while the Greek and Latin languages were cultivated, our own was forgotten, and remained wholly neglected.

* Lord Bolingbroke relates that there was a person who, every time he entered church, thanked God there had been such patient learned men.

We have already treated of the rapid flight the Italian language, guided by the pens of the three great Florentines, Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, had taken in the last century both in verse and in prose. It cannot be denied that its progress was not suddenly arrested by the causes we have indicated, and remained for a great part of the century in a kind of lethargy. If we speak of poetry, even after the middle of the century, there was hardly any writer who deserves to be mentioned throughout Italy; the style of the few was rude and incorrect, the thoughts fallacious and far-fetched, like false gems engraved in rude metals which are coarsely worked. Giusto, Count of Valmontone, is probably the only one who departed from this style in his amorous ode, which he has entitled the *beautiful hand* (*La bella mano*). He was an imitator of Petrarch, and has written with a degree of nature his thoughts expressed in the phrases in use with his model; the epoch of his death falls in 1452; and he consequently belongs partly to the past epoch, wherein the study and admiration of that great poet had not yet yielded to new objects.

With regard to Tuscany, we shall begin with mentioning a few who enjoyed more fame than they possessed merit. A poet of Arezzo, called Nicholas Cieco, acquired very great celebrity. We have no precise account of him, except that he was blind, and lived in the times of Eugene IV. and Martin V. We learn from Pontano* that, in Florence particularly, he sang on days of festival historical events both sacred and profane; that a great crowd of people ran after him, and listened to him; and that he excited the highest admiration. It is not known

* The passage of Pontano is quoted by Tiraboschi.—*Storia della Letter. Ital.* tom. 6.

whether he sang extempore ; probably he had meditated upon his themes before, but the effect of admiration was the same upon people who listened to his verses *en passant*, and which cold criticism could not deliberately examine.

Song adds a great charm to verse ; and Petrarch himself was frequently wont to sing his own upon the lute*. Harmony, by a sweet enchantment, makes even middling verses touch the heart, and receive applause. The superlative praises given to the blind Areteine correspond not with two fragments which are extant of him†, from which, however, it would be an injustice to judge of him, as it might happen that they are of the inferior order. Blindness has never been prejudicial to poetic talent ; nay, may probably aid the strength of imagination by collecting it together better by depriving it of distractions ; and leaving out many examples of great poets who were blind, beginning with Homer, it is certain that Milton produced his grand poem for the greater part during his blindness.

Aurelius Brandolini, another blind man, although the dates of his birth and death may not have been clearly ascertained, is however known to have lived after the middle of the fifteenth century. He was of a noble Florentine family, and enjoyed such high reputation that we cannot avoid making honourable mention of him ; and who, in fact, would not admire a man who, blind almost from his birth, became at once a poet, an orator, a philosopher, and celebrated literato ? His fame procured him an invitation into Poland from the King Matthias, whose funeral ora-

* Quod quidem genus primus apud nostros Franciscus Petrarca instituisse dicitur, qui edita carmina caneret ad leutum. — Paul Cortes de Cardinal, lib. 2. p. 74.

† Crescim. tom. 3. p. 162. Lami, Catal. Ricc. p. 295.

tion he afterwards recited. He sang extempore verses throughout Italy at the sound of his cittern upon whatever subjects were proposed to him, in the most respectable assemblies, and in Rome, particularly before Sixtus IV. He afterwards put on the religious habit of S. Augustin, and became a celebrated preacher. We infer from praises, too, which were bestowed upon him by Matthew Bosso, a man of taste and learning, that, even making some allowances for exaggeration, this man must have received from nature an extraordinary talent; and we wonder that, deprived of his sight, he attained so much. Among many of his works, which are now forgotten, the work *De Ratione Scribendi* indicates the clearness of the ideas this man possessed, and the brilliant order in which he arranged them.

Matthew Bosso says, that in listening to the philosophical reasonings he made use of in his discourses, he considered that he was hearing, not the modern celebrated commentators of Plato and of Aristotle, but those philosophers themselves. That blindness, probably, which permitted him not to devote his attention to the elaborate follies introduced by commentators, and would have obliged him to imbibe so many errors and vain words, and which left him to himself in the long meditations in which his situation forced him to entertain himself by following the logic and the philosophy of nature, which deceives not when it is rightly interrogated, enabled him, as his reason was not spoilt by the art of sophistry, to reason better than many others*.

Another improvvisatore enjoyed equal reputation, and left behind him some remembrance of his muse. The Aretine family, Accolti, furnished at this epoch many

* Mazzuch. Scritt. Ital.

very illustrious men. We have already spoken of Francis the lawyer, and of Benedict the historian ; Bernardo the poet was son of the latter. His merit was thought so singular, that it obtained for him the name of *Unico*, which was generally given him even by Ariosto,

Il gran lume Aretin l'Unico Accolti.

He appears to have recited, and to have been even an extempore songster in public meetings. Whenever these meetings took place, they were considered a festival ; magnificent preparations were ordered, and the greatest expectations were raised. Like in the times of the ancient Romans, when Stazio appointed the day in which he would recite a piece of the *Thebaid*, the people repaired to him in crowds*, so it happened to the Aretine. Not the people alone, but the most learned men, such as Cortesa and Bembo, frequently expressed their admiration of him in his extempore declamations. He lived much at the court of Urbino, which was a rival to that of the House of Medicis, and was the sojourn of learning and elegance ; and, in fact, we find Unico among the orators of the courtier of Castiglione, the scene of which is laid in Urbino, under the eyes of the Duchess and of the Signora Emilia Pia. All agree that the Aretine was passionately enamoured with the Duchess, whom he describes, probably, in a sonnet†, which makes no

* *Curritur ad vocem jucundum et carmen amicæ
Thebaidos lætam quum fecit Statius urbem
Promisitque diem.—JUVEN. Sat. 7.*

† Among many other testimonies there is that of Bembo to the Cardinal Bibbiena. “ The Duchess and the Lady Emilia Pia are attended by Unico, and he is more warm in his ancient ardour, which he says has lasted three lustres and a half, and hopes now more than ever to attain the end of his desires, having been required by the Duchess to declaim extempore when he hopes to move that heart of stone. He will make an extempore oration in two or three days ;

mean appearance in the poetry of Muratori by the side of the most beautiful*. Whether the Duchess gave that disdainful answer to the amorous importunities made to her by Unico, which Gandolfo Porrino relates, or whether it is an invention of his, is not easy to say†.

when he has done so, I will give you notice; I should like much you could be there, as I am sure he will declaim excellently."

* He begins :

Di fiammeggiante Porpora vestita, &c.

† Let us hear what he himself says :

E in simil casi sol donò l' alloro
 A quell' antica Duchessa d' Urbino
 Vostra parente che vale un tesoro.
 Stava in sua corte l'unico Aretino
 E dette e scritte avea mirabil cose
 Di quel bel volto angelico e divino :
 Onde l' interne sue voglie amorose
 Un dì, mirando in quei bei lumi santi.
 Quasi piangendo, in questa giusa espouse,
 Alma mia Diva, in amar voi di quanti
 Mai furo avanzo tutti, e assai m' è detto,
 Lancillotto, Tristano, e gli altri erranti
 Onde vi chieggio, e fia tra noi secreto
 Quella pazzia d' amor, senza la quale
 Nessun piacer compitamente è lieto.
 Rispose quella saggia alma reale,
 Che non era di quelle sautarelle,
 Che più che i fatti han le parole a male,
 Sapete, che alle donne poverelle,
 Comanda ogni marito o buono, o reo,
 E che del suo voler fa legge a quelle ;
 Ditene una parola al Duca mio ;—
 S' egli se ne contenta, come spero,
 Adempito sarà vostro desio
 Rimase spennacchiato il Cavaliere, &c.

" And in similar cases he only gave the laurel to that ancient Duchess of Urbino, your relation, who is worth a treasure. The Unique Aretine was at her court, and had both said and written wonderful things of that fine, angelic and divine countenance ; and admiring one day the beautiful holy eyes, he thus, almost in tears, declared the internal amorous flame which devoured him. My kind goddess, in loving you I far surpass all who ever were ; and far behind me are Lancillotto, Tristano, and the other wanderers : whence I demand of you, and let it be a secret between us, that favour of love, without which no pleasure is perfectly satisfied. That wise and royal fair one answered, She was not one of those pretending saints who think words worse than facts ; know, said she, that

It is necessary also to mention Benedict, the nephew of Bernard, belonging to the family which was most fruitful in learned men. He was no Italian writer; but the singularity of seeing a group of learned men appertaining to the same family, will plead excuse for us. He was born in the year 1497, and died in 1549. He enjoyed great fame both as a literato and poet. There are but few remains of his productions; the testimonies of his merit are very respectable. Paul Manuzio, Sadoleto, Molza, and above all Vida, who was the best judge, probably, at that time of Latin verses, and who, in the manuscript code of the *Poetica**, at that time addressed to the Cardinal Dovizi, pays a great tribute of praise to the young Accolti in the following verses:

. *Tecum vadentem passibus æquis*
Accoltum juvenem aspiciam, quem sœpe maligno
Sudanitem clivo dulci miserantur amore
Pierides fessumque sinu super ardua tollunt
Parnassi juga; sœpe antro silvisque recondunt
Secretis puerum egregium placitoque fruuntur
Amplexu et dulci pia libant oscula curæ
Dum leget intacta lauri de fronde coronam
Insignem patruique audet se tollere supra
Divinas laudes famæque aspirat avorum.

He was Archbishop of Ravenna, Secretary of Clement VII., and was afterwards made cardinal, and legate in the Mark of Ancona. He incurred a disgrace, not generally known, under Paul III. He was shut up in the castle of San Angelo, and would have been exposed to a severe trial; he liberated himself, however, by means

every husband, either good or bad, commands poor women, and that his will is a law to the latter; say a word about it to my duke, and if he be pleased, as I hope he will be, your desire shall be fulfilled. The chevalier remained speechless and surprised," &c.—*GANDOLFO Porr. Rime.*

* See Tiraboschi, where he speaks of the manuscript of the *Poetica della Vida*, tom. 7.

of money, but the shortness of his life leads us to conjecture that bitterness and remorse accelerated his end*. But those poets, with the exception of Bernard Accolti, who has left some trace of his genius, met with the fate which usually attends extempore songsters or reciters, who are praised with enthusiasm while they are alive, but who are almost forgotten after death, whose great fame leaves as great a vestige behind it as smoke in air, or froth upon the water :

. equal vestigio lassa
Che fumo in aere ed in acqua la spuma†.

To appreciate the state of poetry in this epoch, it becomes necessary to refer to those who have left productions behind them, which, however, were not in great esteem. If the poets were deficient in the worth of their productions, they were not wanting in number in Tuscany, especially in Florence. A barber, Domenico di Nanni, better known by the surname of Burchiello, was, if not the first author‡, at least celebrated as the father of an extravagant and ridiculous manner of making poetry, for the most part unintelligible, half satirical, written generally in what is called an obscure cant (gergo,) and in which we rarely meet with a verse which deserves to be read. This man has, nevertheless, not only found idle commentators who have lost their time in searching into the sense of these crooked and obscure images, but he has been the father of a ridiculous filiation that attempted to imitate him; so true it is that novelty, however, extravagant, finds followers.

* Mazzucch. Scrit. Ital. tom. 1. p. 1. Tirab. tom. 7.

† Dante.

‡ The invention is made to descend down to Francos Sacchetto, and perhaps to Petrarch, Crescimb. History of vulgar Poetry, lib. 1.

The celebrity he acquired, and the editions which have been made of his poems, prove how many there are who like to read obscurities out of mere curiosity, and that there are curious persons about the answers of oracles, and the ridiculous prophecies made by Brandano or Nostradamus, although they may be persuaded of their imposture. Doni, amongst others, has made commentaries which are more obscure than the text. We will leave both the original, the imitators, and the commentators, in that oblivion into which they have at last deservedly fallen*.

With them we will leave others to the same fate, amongst whom are Francis Cei, Bernard Bellincioni, Florentines, &c., in spite of the reputation they enjoyed in their times; and in order to discover in Italy and in Tuscany something that deserves the attention of the reader, we must have recourse to the temple of the Muses, that is, to the House of Medicis. A thought now originated with this house which might have given a glorious stimulus to the Italian Muses. The ingenious men who frequented that house, thought they could awaken the emulation of poets by proposing a theme, and offering a premium for that composition which was judged the best.

This theme was friendship (*amicizia*), the premium a crown of silver, which imitated leaves of laurel. This idea is attributed to Piero de Medicis, who followed the particular counsel given by Leon Baptist Alberti. The recital was held in S. Maria del Fiore, which was nobly

* Even in these times persons of taste were not wanting, who judged of the verses of Burchiello for what they were worth, as we discover in the epigram of Landini,

Plurima mitto tibi tonsoris carmina Burchi
Hæc lege; sed quid cum legeris inde? Nihil.

decorated for the occasion, where the Florentine magistrates, the ambassador of Venice, a great number of prelates, and an infinite concourse of people assembled. These were important circumstances to give greater solemnity to the function, and raise the fancy of poets*. But the folly and treachery evinced by the secretaries of the pope, who, on account of honour, had been chosen judges, rendered futile this glorious attempt. Under the pretext of equality of merit, they conceded the premium to the church of S. Maria del Fiore, which disgusted at once the candidates and the whole city.

It may be said, that, if this noble thought had been properly carried into execution, and continued for many years, the glorious stimulus would have considerably contributed to advance the Tuscan Muse. Europe owes the discovery of interesting physical and mathematical truths to a similar emulation, and France may be said to be indebted to it for her *chef d'œuvres* of eloquence and poetry.

The true taste for Italian poetry began to flourish again in the same Medicean house, even in the midst of the predominant taste for Greek and Latin letters, particularly after the middle of the century. We have slightly mentioned the Octaves of Poliziano; it may be repeated, that this little poem, although written by the author at a very young age, that is, when he was fourteen or fifteen years old†, is the most brilliant jewel that the Italian Parnassus can shew during the whole of that century. The images contained in it are at once beautiful and modern, the expressions correctly poetical, the

* Lami, Catal. della Riccardiana: the poets who recited are mentioned there.

† See Tiraboschi, and Monsig. Fabbr. Elogy of Poliziano, ed. of Parma in 8vo.

style so easy and sonorous, that it appears rather to be the work of a well-practised poet, than of a young man who was occupied in any thing but in Italian poetry. It is true that the fancy indulges in an excessive luxury, as is frequent in young men, and after he has proposed the theme which he wishes to sing, viz.,

Le gloriose pompe, e i fieri Ludi
 Della città che il freno allenta e stringe
 Ai magnanimi Toschi, e i regni crudi
 Di quella Dea che il terzo ciel dipinge
 E i premii degni agli onorati studii, &c.,

he entirely forgets the theme of the two first verses, and occupies himself only with loves in the first and following canto, where we discover that the little poem is far from being terminated. Probably he had made the regular design of it, which was to have been executed in various cantos, and the parts would have been well connected, particularly as his judgment became matured by age. We cannot, therefore, but consider these Octaves as an imperfect fragment; a fragment, however, upon which the two great Italian epic poets, Ariosto and Tasso, have studied, as Michael Angiolo did upon the trunk of the statue in the Belvedere, (*Torso del Belvedere.*)*

Boccaccio created the octave rhyme, and availed himself of it, also, in that description of poetry, for which great poets had unanimously intended it, for the narrative; but it attained the highest perfection under Poliziano, and there is a greater distance between the octaves of Boccaccio and those of Poliziano, than between the latter and those of the *Furioso* and the *Jerusalem*.

* An old trunk of a statue, without head, legs and arms, which existed in the Vatican, upon which Buonarrotti is said to have long studied.

Poliziano, however, might have been one of the greatest Italian poets, if the spirit of his age, and the circumstances in which he found himself situated, had not impelled him to other studies.

Jerome Benivieni may be united to Poliziano, and they have a good right to be considered the restorers of the Italian Parnassus. He was born two years before Poliziano, and his long life, which was protracted to ninety years, gave him every opportunity for study. We discover in his poetry that perfection which the style was every day acquiring. The subject of his poems is, for the most part, the spiritual; and instead of the profane, which forms the theme of the greater number of poets, he treats of divine, love. Those Platonic ideas are interwoven in it, however, which were then predominant in Florence, and throughout the greater part of Italy; a philosophy in which Benivieni was instructed by his friends, Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola.

This man, who was so celebrated in his times, has chosen to adorn an ode of Benivieni with his commentaries*. In them we have a new proof of the philosophical vain-glory which prevailed in that time. A genius like Pico has employed three long books in commenting upon a few verses, and has enveloped the Platonic maxims in such a prolix verbosity, that he has probably rendered the commentary more obscure than the text itself. It was a misfortune that such geniuses, accustomed to the blind veneration of the ancients, ventured not to examine obscure absurdities with reason, and

* It begins—

Amor dalle cui man sospeso il freno
Del mio cor pende, &c.

think for themselves. The Romans possessed this courage. Cicero often appreciates the Platonic maxims, and the commentators of them for what they are worth; and by adhering, therefore, to solid truths, unincumbered by any ambiguity of words, he has been enabled to teach so many fine moral truths in the Tusculan and academic questions, clothed in a golden style, and which, on that account, softly penetrate our heart, while the reading of Ficino, of Pico, and the whole herd of modern Platonics, is not suffered in our days.

The true merit of Benivieni consists in being restorer of the good style of poetry. This poet was one of the zealous partisans of Savonarola, who had so strangely warmed his fancy by his fanatic sermons, as to demean his muse to sing sacred and extravagant follies. He survived his friends and enemies of all factions, and desired his ashes might be placed by the side of those of his friend, the Count della Mirandola, in St. Mark's, a church in which he had often admired the eloquence displayed by his sacred director, Friar Jerome, for whom he invariably preserved a religious reverence.

After these two, the glory of the Tuscan poetry of that age is particularly confined to the great Lorenzo de Medicis. Lucretia Donato is the beautiful woman who furnishes a theme to his rhymes, of whom Lorenzo makes the most flattering portrait in prose, in the commentary he wrote upon his own verses. Phidias appears to have carved the proportions of her body, the Graces to have adorned her demeanour, and Minerva her mind; if, indeed, the picture be not the son, in great part, of love, or at least greatly embellished by him. The lyric poem has much merit; the ideas are dictated by a pleasing imagination, frequently original, and

sometimes sublime*. Many of them might be united together, the complexion of which would demonstrate this poet superior to that froth of cold rhyme-makers, who crowded the following age, and who have united nothing else together, in so many verses they made, but

Fior, frondi, erbe, ombre, antri, onde, aure soavit.

These poems of Lorenzo, however, want a certain important finish, viz., a facility of style, and that poetic colouring, which, being united to facility, produces the harmony which flatters the ear so softly, and at the same time expresses the ideas with evidence, but without degrading them. Great poets have proved that the most common things may be covered with a poetical varnish. This merit is of such great importance, that frequently weak and low ideas, favoured by it, become applauded, like rude and plebeian persons, who find admittance to a festival by the noble garments they wear.

Lorenzo indeed is not entirely without this style, but it is not frequent with him. A harshness, a want of harmony, of clearness, and, in general, of a felicity of expression, mark his works. He is a painter, whose figures are frequently naturally represented, which have sharp contours, and a colouring which is not very natural. Few of the literati of that age were calculated to perceive those defects; consequently, Pico della Mirandola himself, more intent upon thoughts than upon style, and not a little blinded by a partiality towards his friend, formed his poems after those of Dante and Petrarch.

By a similar motive the illustrious Englishman, the writer of the Life of Lorenzo the Magnificent, is conti-

* Mons. Fabbroni, in his notes to the Life of Lorenzo, has mentioned some of them that prove it.

† Petrarca, par. 2.

nually exalting it to excess, and translates some of them very faithfully; but a foreigner, however well he may possess a language not his own, can hardly become acquainted with its poetical refinements. He, however, has the merit of having drawn from obscurity many of the poems of Lorenzo, and amongst others, the pretty little poem entitled *Ambra*, which should never have been in it. *Ambra* is the name given by Poliziano and Lorenzo to the villa of Cajano, from the river Ombrone. The English author thinks there was an island in it, where Lorenzo went to pass his days of delight; that an inundation of the Ombrone destroyed it, and that Lorenzo has given a poetical clothing to this event in those verses. A nymph, called *Ambra*, bathing in the river, falls in love with him: he runs to embrace her, she flies along his banks; the river follows, but cannot come up with her. He asks aid from his elder brother, the Arno, who swells his waters, and prevents her from flying further. Ombrone is about coming up with her: she demands the assistance of Diana, and as Daphne was transformed into laurel, so she becomes transformed into stone. It appears to us, in this fable, that he wished rather to pay his court to his villa *Ambra*, the fields surrounding which are frequently inundated with water in the overflowings which take place*, and thus

* There exists no document of there having been a small island in the Ombrone; its bed, near Poggio a Cajano, is narrow, and does not appear capable of having contained an island, where Lorenzo could betake himself for diversion, and the verses,

In guisa allor di piccola isoletta

Ombrone amante superbo Ambra cinge, &c.,

favour our conjecture. In this little poem we find the observation which has been continued down to our times, that whenever the fume of the lagoons of Volterra raises itself more than usual, it is a sign of rain:

Volterra, e i laghi torbidi che spumano
E pioggia aspetta se più alto fumano.

give a poetical origin to his delightful villa, and the beautiful hill on which it is situated.

Lorenzo wrote also facetious poetry, such as the *Beoni*, (Topers,) *La Compagnia del Mantellaccio*, or Society of the Great Cloak, and the *Canti Carnascialeschi*, or Carnival Songs, and introduced a better regulation and order at those spectacles, where they were sung. The *Nencia* may be considered as the first poetry in rural language, which was afterwards brought to perfection by Baldovini, in the *Cocco da Varlungo*; a kind of poetry, however, with which it is no great glory to abound. The Muses are not fond of this language. A noble lady may please to mask herself once or twice as a peasant girl, and use the language of that character for amusement, but she would disgust us by repeating it too often.

All the other poets of Florence, who re-awakened the Tuscan Muse, such as Pulci, M. Franco, and others, may be said to have sprung from the same House of Medicis, which was their friend and companion. There were three brothers Pulci, Bernard, Lucas, and Louis. They found greater delight in pacific studies, than in the career of ambition or commerce. Bernard is one of the first writers of pastoral poetry. He translated the Eclogues of Virgil, and addressed them to Lorenzo, and a little poem upon the passion of Christ, to a nun. The tournament (*La Giostra*,) is of Lucas. It differs only from the prose by the metre, and is wholly eclipsed by the *Stanze* of Poliziano, which it has by the side of it. It may be considered rather an historical relation of the tournament, than a poem, as not only all the combatants, but the uniforms they wore, are mentioned with precision; and like a chronologist, he gives the year, the

month, and the day, on which the tournament took place. He wrote epistles in third rhyme, the *Driadeo d'Amore*, and particularly the *Ciriffo Calvaneo*, which is a poem in octave rhyme, the first probably seen in Italy since that of Boccaccio*. It may be considered as a burlesque poem. The heroes of the poem are two, natural sons of two ladies, who pass through many adventures: we frequently meet with some successful verses, and even with some genteel satirical allusions.

The *Morgante Maggiore* of Louis is better known. He was incited to write this by Lucretia Tornabuoni, the mother of Lorenzo†. This is a poem, too, rather comic than sublime. The writer is not without imagination, nor purity of language, but the poem is full of unconnected parts and extravagancies. The *Morgante Maggiore* is always printed in the series of Italian poems, but is no longer read. Matthew Franco, a Florentine canon, was a writer of facetious sonnets, with which he and Louis Pulci sometimes carried on an agreeable war, and Lorenzo made his son Piero learn some of them by heart, and recite them in the presence of the company which assembled at his house. The true taste for Italian poetry may be said to have been revived in this age, by this group of poets.

Nor was Tuscany without women who cultivated the Muses. We have already mentioned Alessandra Scala. The pious Lucrezia Tornabuoni, the mother of Lorenzo, wrote sacred hymns, and instilled into her son a taste for this kind of verse. Poliziano had a high esteem for

* According to the testimony of Varchi, in the Herculaneum, Pulci has only written the first canto; the following are of Giambullari: it appears an imitation of the Romance, the MS. of which is in the Laurenziana library, entitled *Liber Pauperis Prudentis*.

† Morg. canto 23.

this woman, and Crescimbeni makes no hesitation in preferring her to the greater part of the poets of that age*. Poliziano speaks also of Cecca of Sienna, whom he honours with the name of the tenth Muse. At the beginning of the sixteenth century the poetic style continued to refine, and not a few writers might be mentioned, who, at least, on account of their elegance of style, were distinguished in the midst of the political turbulencies which agitated Florence for about forty years. Of these it will be necessary to mention a few, both on account of the celebrity they attained, and some of them on account of the themes, upon which they undertook to write.

Louis Alamanni, a Florentine, wrote epic poems, satires, eclogues, epigrams, comedies, and lyric poetry; all full, according to the taste prevalent in the age, of meadows enamelled with flowers, the murmurs of zephyrs and brooks, productions which are now almost entirely lost in oblivion. He wrote also *La Coltivazione*, to which he owes his fame. He is an imitator of the Georgics of Virgil, but follows his great master, as it is easy to imagine, at a great distance. Virgil, who, in the *Æneid*, which he never corrected, is sometimes languid, displays in the Georgics a correctness, an exactitude, and an inimitable force. He has been acquainted with the method of seizing that point, in which strength on one side and the propriety of the phrases on the other, easily meet, and form a poetic colouring, always beautiful and lively, without ever offending the sight. This merit, possessed by the Mantuan bard, has probably never been attained by any poet of any nation.

* *Della Volgar. Poesia*, tom. 3.—See Cionacci.

Alamanni is master of elegance and purity of style, but he is frequently weak and languid, because he is verbose, and the thoughts are widely expressed, and as it were dissolved in too many words; to which may be added that he has used blank verse, which is adapted also to weaken poetry the more, when it is not sustained by sublimity of imagination. We have elsewhere shewn what great need Italian verse has of rhyme. The narrative or descriptive poetry relating to rural concerns, deprived of that charm, creeps as it were upon the ground, and is converted into mere prose. Thus it often happens with Alamanni. The style of Virgil, on the contrary, associated with the sound of Latin verse, with the same images, forms pictures which resemble the rural views painted by Claude Lorrain. Example explains more than learning. The great master of the poetic art has said

Difficile est proprie communia dicere :

What is more common, than to teach that it is proper to sow the corn in that ground whence we have taken the tares and the lupins? The following is the manner in which Virgil expresses himself,

*Aut ibi flava, seres, mutato sidere, farra;
Unde prius lætum siliqua quassante legumen;
Aut tenues fœtus viciæ tristisque lupini
Sustuleris fragiles calamos, sylvamque sonantem.*

In these verses we have the countryman carrying the bundle of vegetables, which are crumbling from dryness; we hear the little noise made by the seeds which are shaken within their shells; and this picturesque expression of a common event, excites great pleasure by the perfect imitation which is made of it. Alamanni has added to agriculture, properly so called, the cultivation of gardens, which Virgil meditated but did not carry into execution.

The revolutions which so frequently happened in his native country, obliged Alamanni to fly from Florence various times. He met with the most polite and generous reception from Francis I., and was employed in embassies; and Charles V., having reproached him in one of them with making use of an indiscreet poetical expression, he replied to him with decorum, but without losing his presence of mind*.

John Rucellai, the son of Bernard, in his little poem of the Bees, (*Api*,) written shortly before the *Cultivation*, (*La Coltivazione*,) probably possesses more vigour than Alamanni, although he is also an imitator of Virgil. The beginning in which he gives his reason for not having written in rhymed verses is ingenious; rhymes, images of the echo, ought to be avoided by whoever writes of bees, which shun the places where the echo is heard. He was cousin of Leo X., and might have aspired

* Alamanni had once written or said, speaking of the Austrian eagle :

• • • • • L'Aquila grifagna

Che per più divisor due becchi porta.

(The ravenous eagle that wears two beaks to devour more.)

In his discourse as ambassador he named the eagle, and Charles interrupting him said: *Si l'aquila grifagna*, &c. Alamanni replied that, when he said so, he spoke as a poet whose character is to feign and exaggerate, but that now speaking calmly in prose, he spoke the truth. The English poet Waller appears in the following century to have imitated this reply. During the civil war he wrote the panegyric of Cromwell. Under his command, Charles I., King of England, had been put to death, and the poetry was esteemed one of the best productions of Waller. Upon the re-establishment of the Stuart family, the same poet wrote the panegyric of Charles II. Appearing at court the king thanked him, but added, "Permit me to tell you, you have succeeded better in the panegyric of Cromwell." "This is," replied Waller, "because poets succeed better in fictions than in truths.

to the purple. He was legate in France, and being afterwards sent by his native country to Rome to compliment Adrian, he delivered an eloquent oration. He was appointed Castellan of Castel S. Angelo, and died immaturely when near attaining the cardinal's hat. By his tragedy *Rosmonda*, he is numbered among the first writers of regular tragedies.

The vigour that Casa imparted to his verses, in a time when effeminacy reigned almost universally, deserves to be noted; but we shall speak of him more properly among the prose writers.

It appears that that kind of poetry which is altogether burlesque, belongs solely to the Italians, and that the ancient languages were entirely strangers to it. We have given its origin in the *Compagnia del Mantellaccio*, in the *Beoni* of Lorenzo de Medicis, in the *Canti Carnascialeschi*, &c., leaving out Burchiello, with his imitators, for the reasons we have already adduced.

This kind of poetry reckoned, at the end of the century, a man in Francis Berni, who became the prince of it, and who gave his name to this style, which was called from him the *Bernescan*. He was of a family of Bibbiena, was born in Campo-Vecchio, and lived several years in Florence. He afterwards went to Rome in search of fortune; and the character he bore, and the vicissitudes he passed through, are comically described by himself in the *Orlando Innamorato*. If he found no advancement at court, (and a poet, particularly of his kind, is the person least adapted to hold fortune fast,) he acquired very great fame by his verses. Undeceived in his hopes he returned to Florence, to enjoy tranquillity, amidst his books, and the revenues of a canonry of the cathedral which the cardinal Hippolitus de Medicis ordered to be conferred upon him. A dangerous confidant of two hostile cousins,

the cardinal and the duke Alexander, he escaped the first time, by good fortune, from the danger which hung over the duke*; and it is reported that refusing to second the duke who instigated him to give poison to the cardinal, he became himself a victim of the poison, and thus a dangerous confidant in the meditated crime was extinguished.

The *Orlando Innamorato* of Bojardo is so rudely written, that, as its tales and images please as universally as its style displeases, it has found various poets who have given themselves the trouble to do it over again. All, however, yield to Berni. The facility and nature of the style are united to a purity of language, and the humorous descriptions and spirited mottoes given in it, enchant the readers from time to time. It is true that a great void is frequently found, such as details of trivial things in rhymed prose; no small defect, and which is common to all poems of this kind, with which Italy abounds so greatly, not excepting even the Ricciardetto.

The *Orlando Furioso* probably has deceived all. It possesses in great part the sublimity of epic poetry; but even when it lowers itself to vulgar tales, its style is not so. The poet then, both with the choice he makes of elegant words, and phrases which are neither low nor far-fetched, has known the manner of forming a style proper to himself, which neither raises itself too high, nor lowers itself too much, which removes us from the idea of prose, as well as of sublimity, a kind of *mezzatinta*, which all feel, and none have been able to imitate.

Returning to Berni, his other poems, chapters, sonnets, &c., are written in the same style. Highly pleasing, and very superior to the productions of so many of his imitators,

* See the present History.

they have, nevertheless, the same defect. In the midst of spirited jests and images which excite a smile, we meet with low and vulgar scurrility, which the obligation, in which the poet is placed of endeavouring continually to raise laughter, has forced him to adopt. Probably this is a defect inherent in this kind of poetry; viz., the pretension to make us laugh at every period. A man, however spirited, who affects such a character in a company becomes soon tiresome, falls into lowness, into equivoques, by which he finally disgusts his listeners. The same happens with a poet who makes the same profession. The style, in which the jest to laugh at is wanting, (and it is very often wanting,) is converted into insipid prose, and it is a law of nature that we cannot laugh too long. The Italian language is hardly acquainted with that poetry of a middle character, of which the *Leggio* of Boileau in France, the *Riccio Rapito* in England are models. The *Secchia Rapita* cannot absolutely be placed among the latter; here sublime octaves which would not disgrace the Jerusalem, stand by the side of Bernescan buffooneries. The spirited author of Morning and Mid-day, (Mattino e Mezzogiorno,) may be said to have been the first who attempted this style. In whatever manner, however, we may judge of burlesque poets, Berni is the prince of them. He wrote also Latin verses with much elegance, and his name will assuredly be immortal*. In the same class must be placed the *Canti Carnascialeschi*, so called because they were sung in the magnificent masquerades of the carnival in Florence; they are also mediocre poetry, and the whole spirit of them consists for the most part in one continued equivocation.

* Quadr. tom. 2. Mazzucch. Scritt. Ital. tom. 2. p. 2.

Pieces of poetry adapted to theatres and shows arose again in this same epoch, and Tuscany had a great share in them. Tragedies and comedies in past ages had been written in Latin, which became the ruling language, and Albertin Mussato, and Petrarch, and many others after them, had trod the sock and worn the Latin buskin. We have already noted in its place the *Polissena* by Leonard Bruni, and the *Philodoxos* by Leon Baptist Alberti, which were written in the same language. Even the more recent events which had taken place had furnished themes for it, such as the catastrophe of James Piccinino *. The first dawn, probably, of theatrical representations in the Italian language, is to be found in the vulgar display made of the sacred mysteries, in the Coliseum, of which Julian Dati, the Florentine, is one of the principal writers. Those of Feo Balcaro are cotemporary with these, whose Abraham and Isaac were recited in the church of the Holy Mary Magdalene in Florence in the year 1449.

The great Lorenzo de Medicis had a share in this revival, by writing with far greater sense and taste than those rude poets had done, his sacred drama of St. John and St. Paul, which we discover at once to be a production of a statesman, in the opinions and rules for governing well with which it abounds.

This drama was represented in Florence either publicly upon the arrival of the dukes of Milan, among the other sacred shews given on that occasion by his children in his private palace, or at the nuptials of Magdalene his daughter with Alexander Cibo, the nephew of Innocent VIII. It is written in octave rhyme, and the

* A tragedy written by Laudivio of Vezano in the Lunigiana.—Tirab. History of Ital. Literature, tom. 6. p. 893.

verses of those who wrote in those times were for the most part rhymed.

It is generally believed, that the *Sophonisba* of Tressino is the first regular tragedy which was designed with the critical rules of Aristotle. It is written in blank verse; but we must go further down, and recognise the first restorer of the tragic theatre in *Poliziano*.

His *Orpheus*, a musical representation, is the most similar of the Italian tragedies to the Greek, which, it is well known, were accompanied by song*. This circumstance renders it also the first of the musical dramas. The merit of the poet is increased by his youthful age of eighteen years, or little more, in which he wrote it, and the period of two days which he employed to complete it †. This tragic drama was sung before the cardinal Gonzaga, in Mantua, and composed at his request: this was the first time that Italy had seen a theatre opened for the public.

The poet, although young, has proved himself a wonderful master of the art of turning, as it were, his verses, in order to lend them to the song. It has been observed in our days by the greatest writer of dramas, that of all the words of the Italian language, we can hardly make use of the eighth part in song. *Poliziano* had foreseen, or, to speak better, felt this rule. In order, however, to form a just idea of that production, we must not read it in the common editions, wherein we find it frequently mutilated and incorrect, but in that given us by the father Ireneo Affò, who had the good fortune to find an ancient code of it in the convent of the Holy Ghost, in Reggio.

* *Metastasio* Disser. upon the Drama.

† *Bettinelli*, of the letters and arts asserts, that it was represented in Mantua in 1473. *Tiraboschi* defers it some years, but the cardinal died in 1483, whence it cannot be much deferred.

It there presents itself to us with the title of tragedy, in a division into five acts, and with all tragic majesty. Trissino, who came so much after, and who is falsely considered as the first, was followed by many contemporaries.

John Rucellai, author of the *Rosmonda*, would be his competitor, and even rival, in the false glory of inventor, if it is true, as Braccio Martelli relates *, that those two poets wrote at the same time, and that in their contests in Rome they mounted upon platforms and recited fragments before the audience, who applauded them. The exact Greek regularity they have pursued has not saved their tragedies from proving wearisome: void of defects, they are also without beauty, and leave the reader chilled. This is the greatest defect of tragedy. The dialogues of the *Orestes*, by Rucellai, are animated by a somewhat better life. They are an imitation of the *Iphigenia in Tauris* of Euripides, as the *Rosmonda* is of *Hecuba* †.

Louis Martelli, a young Florentine, who was snatched away immaturely by death, in his twenty-eighth year, appears to have written his *Tullia* almost at the same time. That tragedy yields in nothing to those we have mentioned.

Various attempts had been made also to regenerate, as it were, comedy. The Siennese academicians, called the *Rozzi*, were probably the first who occupied themselves with it, and had the honour of being frequently summoned to Rome to represent their farces before Leo X. ‡. Regular and judicious comedy arose, probably, later than tragedy. The talent of exciting laughter,

* Negri and Quadrio: although Tiraboschi has doubts.

† Giral. Dial. 2. de Poet. suor. temp.

‡ History of the Academy of the *Rozzi*.

and of doing so with judgment, is perhaps more difficult than that of causing us to shed tears.

The French theatre, which is before that of any nation, boasts of its Corneille, Racine, Voltaire, who are all great tragic writers, and rivals to each other. Molière alone in comedy has no rival. All shed tears, but all do not laugh for the same motive. Zaira has always brought tears from all ranks of persons, while the Misanthrope has excited laughter from persons of wit and intelligence alone. Fine traits, as a great writer has observed, must be natural without being obvious. What is natural and not obvious for persons of spirit is hardly understood by the vulgar: and the vulgar traits which make common people laugh, for the most part, nauseate the former. Such was the salt of Plautus blamed by Horace; and such, too, are the greater part of the scurrilities of Harlequin and Pulcinello, in which the accent, the disfigurement of the words, take the place of spirited jests. Observation, nevertheless, shews us that there are jests which please and make both educated persons and the mob laugh; and these are taken from the natural sources of true ridicule, and maintain themselves such, even through centuries and the various changes of government, of manners, and of fashions. We find some of them in Aristophanes, in Plautus, in Terence; the latter, however, must be rare in all writers who occupy themselves particularly with manners, the ridiculous appearances of their age and fashions, a ridicule which vanishes with the fashions themselves. They are colours which easily perish by time; we must not, therefore, be astonished if we find so little that delights us in our comedies of three centuries ago.

The glory of having made them regular either in verse or in prose is divided among three poets,—Macchiavel,

Ariosto, and the Cardinal of Bibbiena. It is not easy to determine who was the first who wrote; they appear to have laboured at the same time. In order, therefore, to avoid every question and chronological minutia, after searching into which we should remain in the same uncertainty, we will attribute the glory to all three.

The Life of the Cardinal of Bibbiena is so well known, that it is not necessary to occupy ourselves long with him: he was called Bernard Dovizi. He was born at Bibbiena in the year 1470, entered while young the service of the Cardinal John de Medicis, and followed him throughout all the good and painful vicissitudes which attended him. Leo owed the pontificate to his management; and Bibbiena, consequently, received the cardinal's hat from Leo. Employed in various honourable offices and embassies, he was, like his master and the house wherein he lived, a protector of letters and fine arts; and it is sufficient to mention Raphael D' Urbino, of whom he was rather the friend than the patron. He died before Leo, in 1520,—having, however, lost his friendship, probably by the intrigues carried on at the court of France to succeed him in the popedom. The suspicion that he had been poisoned by the pope is void of foundation; but, as it was conformable to the atrocious manners of those times, it was consequently believed by many. The comedy, the Woodlark (*La Calandra*) which he wrote, had the good fortune, in his time, of being preferred to all others; it was represented, probably, in Rome in 1514 before Leo X. and Isabella, Marchioness of Mantua.

The comedies of Macchiavel are not inferior, and some piquant traits are found therein which exceed all that was then written in this kind. And, indeed, one of the greatest writers of theatrical representations, Vol-

taire, goes so far as to assert that the Mandragora of Macchiavel is more valuable than all the comedies of Aristophanes ; an opinion which, although it may find a number of contraditors from a veneration paid the Greeks, is not however without much weight. Ariosto has surpassed all in the threads and texture of the actions he describes ; but as it happens with merits which, carried too far, become defects, the texture of those actions of Ariosto sometimes falls into the improbable. He wrote in a kind of verse which is little adapted to comedy, and rarely tolerable, in the long run, in any kind of poetry. Bibbiena wrote his own in prose as Macchiavel the two which are printed. A manuscript exists, however, in octave rhyme.

A great dispute has been made whether comedies should be written in verse or in prose : this is an useless contest ; the hearer accustoms himself to every thing, to prose, to verse, even to rhyme. Make him laugh, and he will be indifferent to the rest ; nay, will sometimes be pleased with a spirited conceit, to which rhyme will give a better finish. The most cultivated modern nations possess excellent comedies, both in verse and in prose ; experience, therefore, decides, whoever is in different. But is it not beyond all probability that the common people should speak in verse, and particularly in rhyme ? It is as true of verse and of rhyme, as of the foundation of action itself ; if the latter were real, and Zaira or Semiramis really died under the eyes of the spectator, the audience would not be moved with that tender grief which becomes so, because every one knows in the bottom of his heart that a fictitious action is represented. This knowledge makes us pardon both the rapidity of the time in which it is imagined to be achieved, and the lights which represent the day, and

the other decorations. Amidst these ornaments, which are not probable but tolerated, verses and rhymes too will please if the comedies possess real merits. One of their most ostensible defects, however, is the indecent licentiousness with which they are written. The imitation of the ancients, who committed so much sin in this way, was probably the cause of it; but the want of delicacy in the age contributed still more thereto, since the most august persons disdained not to lend their ear in the Vatican to the most coarse indecencies.

If the study of Greek and Latin letters in this epoch was the cause of Italian poetry being neglected, prose was still more so. Tuscany reckons few, and for the most part weak, writers. We have mentioned the Dialogues of Civil Life, by Matthew Palmieri; although they are verbose and diffuse, they are more readily read than prose of the same period, a proof of which is to be found in the many editions, and a translation into the French language, which have been made of them. The Historical Narrations and the Commentaries of the two Capponi, which are estimable for the importance and truth of the facts they contain, are without elegance of style.

Such, also, are the Velluti, the Pitti and many chronologies published in the collection of writers upon Italian affairs. The Histories, by Buoninsegni, the Commentaries of the Civil Occurrences in Florence, by Philip Nerli, the Florentine Histories, by James Nardi, are consulted for the facts, with which they abound, but are void of all grace of style. Nardi followed the hostile faction of the Medicis. Being obliged to fly from his country at a very advanced age, after the establishment in Florence of Duke Alexander, he joined the Strozzi and the other outlaws, and was their ambassador

in Naples to Charles V., to whom he recited a very long and useless oration, in order to induce him to set Florence at liberty; an oration, probably, which was little attended to, and far less understood*.

Although he was devoted to a faction, he has written, with less partiality than would have been supposed, the events which took place in his country from the year 1494 to 1531. We meet in his history with very curious and interesting circumstances, particularly upon the adventures of Savonarola, of whose doctrine he was a follower, and of whose death he was a spectator. He obtained greater reputation by the translation of *Livy*, which was often printed, and is still considered the best. He wrote, also, pieces of poetry, some of the *Canti Carnascialeschi*, and a comedy called *Friendship* (*l' Amicizia*). He lived in exile beyond the eightieth year* of his age.

If these writers shed no great lustre over their country, one appeared in Florence at the end of the epoch, who was intended to indemnify us for every deficiency, and alone suffice to fill up the void. This is the great Florentine secretary, Nicholas Macchiavel, one of the greatest men that Italy, fertile as she is in great genius, has ever produced. He was the master of politics, by which name we are not to understand, as the vulgar think, the art of concealing our own character, and of gaining the favour of princes and lords by flattery, but the science of becoming acquainted with nations, and the means by which their virtues may be called into action, to make even their defects and errors serve the universal good; in one word, the art of governing. Macchiavel was the first who created this science. All that we read in Aristotle, Plato, &c., are only light traits when confronted

* *Varchi Hist.*

† *Mazzucch. Scritt. Ital.*

with the great picture which he has given us. He has taught his profound doctrine in various treatises.

The grand work, according to which we must measure his genius, is, *The Discourses upon Livy*; and he himself appears to think it such*. It is there where he judges of nations, kings, and republics, by reasoning and by facts. Politics are like natural philosophy; that is, an experimental science, without which philosophical theories are regarded as ingenious romances. In politics, even more than in natural philosophy, a frequently repeated and more varied experience becomes necessary, because bodies are subject to immutable laws and the moral agents for the will and the many varieties of circumstances, which can modify and change their actions, are subject to strange anomalies.

In this obscurity, however, if the actions of nations are to be guessed at, it is in the past that the future is to be read. Macchiavel knew this exactly. In examining the history of the Romans, the Greeks, and other nations he makes the most profound observations upon the causes of different events, of civil discords, of the birth of factions, of wars, peace, &c., and frequently makes the application of them to later times, and particularly to the Florentine republic, in the midst of the tempestuous vortex, in which he found himself similar to one of the pilots of a weak vessel. The sagacity and depth he displays in developing the reason whereby an

* In the Dedication, he makes his friends and scholars, Zarchi Buondelmonte and Cosmo Rucellai: he thus expresses himself,— “I send you a present, which, if it does not correspond to the obligations I owe you, is, without doubt, the best which Nicholas Macchiavel has been able to send you; because therein I have expressed all I know and have learnt by a long practice in, and reading of, the affairs of the world.”

absolute government (*principato*) may fall into that of the chief men of the state (*ottimati*), afterwards into the popular, and from thence return to the principato by a natural course after many aberrations, are admirable; he points out the vices of these various systems, and concludes that the best is that which partakes of all three, viz., the *principato*, the *ottimati* and the popular government, *in order that the one may superintend the other*, and prevent either making usurpations. He confirms his opinion by adducing an example of the government of Sparta, which was more stable and firm than that of all the Greek republics, because it was thus constituted; and it would have afforded him great pleasure, if he had lived to our times, to have seen it also confirmed in the government of England, which is indebted for the security and the power to which it has attained, to such a system. He demonstrates the necessity of a nation having one religion, whatever it may be, and observes that some extraordinary laws would not have been accepted, if they had not been made to emanate from God; *because there are many good things known by a prudent man, which contain not evident reasons in themselves to persuade others of them**.

Europe, which has been a spectatress in our days of great events, which sees the form of ancient governments changing before her eyes, may learn great truths from these discourses, and foresee imminent revolutions. We have not abandoned our ancient rudeness, but the perfection of the arts which have given a greater refinement to our pleasures, to our commerce, to our conveniences and luxury, has brought with it a greater corruption in our manners. Europe, therefore, has to learn one

* Lib. 2. cap. 2.

important fact from these discourses, that a corrupted nation, which has come into the possession of liberty, can only preserve herself free with the greatest difficulty; that although even amidst this corruption an extraordinary man may sometimes arise, who may heal for a time the wounds of the nation, as the period of his life is always too short to effect a perfect cure, the nation will relapse at his death into its old disease*.

The arguments and examples which accompany them deserve to be seriously meditated upon in our time. Profound and useful truths shine forth at every passage from the pen of the great author. This is, indeed, the work which has established the fame of Macchiavel, as one of the greatest geniuses, and ought to be at once the code for legislators, for princes, and ministers. The author of the *Spirit of Laws*, David Hume, Lord Bolingbroke, &c., in paying a just tribute of praise to the first creator of this science, have frequently profited of the great views he has developed. When we wish to weigh the merit of Michel Angiolo, it becomes necessary particularly to refer to these political discourses.

Macchiavel unfortunately has been, for the most part, judged according to the book called *Il Principe*, which contains maxims which are universally abhorred. It has been greatly questioned whether the author teaches a perverse doctrine, or whether upon the appearance of it he passes only a secret satire upon wicked princes. We will make a few reflections upon a subject, upon which so much has been written. Macchiavel was of a republican turn of mind. All his other writings breathe liberty and a love of country: he served her when she was free during fourteen years in important employments

* Lib. 1. chapter 16. 17. 18.

and had been removed from them, and persecuted by those who again enslaved her. He was suspected twice of having conspired against the family which had oppressed liberty. The supporters of these principles against the Cardinal Julius de Medicis arose in the gardens of Ruccellai, where Macchiavel read his political discourses, and dictated republican maxims.

Macchiavel, therefore, must have been an enemy of tyranny, which is conformable with the opinions he expresses with so much energy in the political discourses we have quoted, where he unveils to us his heart. How can it be believed that he wishes to promote tyranny, when he has celebrated virtuous princes with so much enthusiasm*? He who has gone so far as to compare with Catiline, that Cesar who has dazzled all writers by the lustre of his great actions, and made them become his panegyrists? He who has shown how preferable virtue is to vice in the violent deaths of so many wicked emperors, and in the tranquil life and natural end of so many others? Whenever his sentiments become dubious, they may be interpreted in these discourses; and in interpreting them, we comprehend that in the Principe he has finely drawn the satire upon a cruel emperor with the mask of those maxims, by showing the arts by which we may arrive at empire, and maintain ourselves in it; and by dedicating his work with the most ingenious artifice to the usurper of the Dukedom of Urbino, Lorenzo de Medicis, whom he certainly could not love, he has made the most cruel satire upon him, because he was not warned of it; since we only dedicate a book full of atrocious maxims to a personage who approves of them, and who chooses to govern himself according thereto.

* Discorsi, book 1, chapter 20.

Macchiavel probably is condemned, because he openly unveils, particularly in the *Principe*, the art of what is called, with no well defined title, politics. This teaches a particular language, a diplomatic cant, in which the words *loyalty*, *good faith*, are not understood according to the value of words in contracts between sovereigns and sovereigns, nations and nations. Each of the contracting parties well knows that interest alone regulates every thing, and prevails over every consideration. When we either cannot, or choose not, to employ force, we make use of every art in order that one of the two parties may be deluded: and as the name of fraud would be indecorous, we make use of another word called reason of state, which is not easily to be defined, and known rather from facts, which contains frequent exceptions to the moral rules which govern the actions of private individuals, in whom that would be a crime which reasons of state allow of, and even command, for the safety of a people or of a throne.

This doctrine is certainly preached by Macchiavel in his *Principe*, but where has he learnt it? In ancient and modern events. Tacitus, Sallust, and many other ancient and modern historians are the fountains whence he has derived it. The whole history, and that part of it particularly of the atrocious times wherein he lived, is a perpetual commentary upon his doctrine; we shall continue to declaim against it, and it will nevertheless be always embraced. A convention between all the governments not to employ it would be as much impracticable as an agreement not to use fire-arms for example in wars, since no army would trust to the others.

The royal author of the Anti-Macchiavel may declaim as he pleases against the *Principe*; when he wrote

that book he was still young, and thought that empire might be carried on by the rigid rules of justice ; but he probably afterwards perceived his error, and retracted it in part in the preface he has written to his military history. The necessity, too, in which he has frequently found himself placed during the period of his authority to cover some of his actions with the varnish of state motive, becomes at once the confutation of that work, and the best defence of Macchiavel*. His Florentine History, which embraces almost the whole of the most interesting period, viz., that of the republic down to the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent, is a model of strength of style, and of wisdom in reflection ; and Italy, since the revival of letters, has seen nothing equal to it. He has been the first to give the example of that great and rapid picture of events which succeeded the ruin of the Roman empire, a picture which Lord Bolingbroke wished to imitate in the design of his history of the war of the Spanish succession, a picture afterwards executed by Robertson, and prefaced to the history of Charles V.

Macchiavel, in his Florentine History, stops only at important events, passes lightly over the wars carried on (as he says) by soldiers without valour and by mercenary captains, who deserve not to occupy the attention of any historian. Such are a crowd of little achievements, when the Florentines contended with Lucca, with Pisa, and other cities. Upon these the historian casts rather a ridicule ; but he stops to contemplate quietly those sanguinary revolutions to which Florence was so frequently subject ; mentions the causes which produced

* The writers who are adverse to and support Macchiavel, are very numerous. They may be seen in the preface to the Florentine edition of his works, an. 1782, in 4to.

them; the weak remedies applied by the government; and in the victory even of one party shews us the seeds of its future ruin. This manner of writing a history is instructive and very useful to statesmen. It cannot be denied, that some inaccuracy has not been discovered in the facts: but this, upon which so much clamour has been raised, never consists in the foundation of an important fact, but only in little circumstances which are not very necessary to the principal event. This accusation, however, is found very true in the Life of Castruccio. Macchiavel appears to have been badly informed of that singular man; since, if he had wished to write a romance and excite astonishment, the naked truth and simple detail of the adventures of the former would have been better adapted thereto than fable.

He is accused by others of having sometimes neglected grammatical correctness in his writings. In his defence, it may be said, that the faults are so slight they are hardly to be discovered. He is the first man who proves that we may write in an energetic and clear style, and still neglect grammatical minutiae. Occupied in great objects, he has employed all his energy in describing them, paying little regard to the rules among which authors are frequently implicated, lose their time in ventilating their words and their position, and arrest the rapid march of genius, and unnerve their style. He appears to have obeyed the precept of Seneca, who censures the art of a too polished writer*. "Look," says he, "to what you write, and not to the manner in which you describe

* *Quære quid scribas, non quemadmodum: cujuscunque orationem videris solicitam et politam, scito, animum quoque non minus esse pusillis occupatum, nōsti complures juvenes, barba, et coma nitidos, de capsula totos; nihil ab illis speraveris forte, nihil boni.—Seneca Epist. cxv. ad Luc.*

it." In spite of those blots, it may be said of his style what has been said in France of his Provincial Letters,—that they established the rule of language; since, after the lapse of many years, it maintained itself in florid beauty, and as dear to the French ears as in the first days in which it was written. This merit becomes still greater in the style adopted by Macchiavel; while so many authors, who were even far later than himself, have decayed, the style of Macchiavel continues, after a lapse of nearly three centuries, as fresh as when it was created, and the phrases approved of in the present day are those which he made use of.

In his Art of War, besides the many great views he has unfolded, he has the merit of divining. He asserts that hand-arms will probably come again into use, and will be equally adopted with fire-arms: the end of the eighteenth century has beheld with astonishment, that when bayonets have contended with cannon the advantage has been frequently decided in favour of the former.

Besides the important subjects which he has handled in so masterly a manner, he disdained not the Muses and elegant trifles; and we discover from the comedies, of which we have already spoken in their proper place, as well as from the tales and pieces of poetry that he has written, that a lively fancy was united to profound genius. We see, from a letter he wrote to Alamanni upon his *Asin d'Oro*, a little sketched poem, that he was not insensible to the fame of a poet*.

* The date is December 17, 1517. Edition of Florence, vol. 6.
" I have this day read the *Orlando Furioso* of Ariosto. The poem is really beautiful, and in many places admirable. If he comes there, recommend me to him; and tell him that I only complain, that, having taken notice of so many poets, he has left me out. . . . and

In offering this illustrious man to notice, we appear to have been transported immediately by his great works, and to have forgotten his life and the events which marked it; and, in fact, these are circumstances of little moment in a man of letters, in comparison with the productions he has given the world. But Macchiavel was also a statesman, and served his country with the greatest advantage. His family is supposed to have sprung from the ancient dukes and marquisses of Tuscany, a trifling ornament not his own in the midst of so many which decorated him, and which were fitted to render any name illustrious. He was the son of Bernard and Bartolommea Nelli, a lady of a cultivated mind, and a friend to the Muses. He was born in the year 1469 in Florence: he lost his father on the 3d of May, 1500, who left him only a scanty patrimony; he immediately devoted himself to public affairs. At the age of twenty-nine, he was elected to the office of second chancellor of the signiors, and soon became secretary of the republic, which was a kind of minister of foreign affairs. From the twenty embassies in which he was employed to the Emperor, the King of France, the court of Rome, &c., we see how important a man he was to the republic. We may imagine how highly serviceable to his country a man of his acquirements must have been; and we have a proof of it, both in the Letters of Office and the Reflections he wrote upon the dangerous events which attended her. Knowing that one of the principal evils, to which republics and sovereignties are exposed, consisted in the mercenary troops they employ, and which are little to be trusted in war, and are dangerous in and that he has done to me in his said Orlando, what I will not do to him in my Asino."

times of peace, he caused a national force to be substituted for them.

Macchiavel was a lover of the republic, and a defender of the established government, as every virtuous citizen ought to be; but was disgraced at the re-establishment of the Medicis in Florence upon the fall of the imbecile Soderini, perpetual gonfaloniere. Macchiavel was deprived of his office, which he had exercised for fourteen years with so much sagacity and integrity. This disgrace proved a fortunate event for letters: the inactive life to which he was condemned gave him leisure to write the most brilliant works, by instructing the Florentine youth in the arts of government in the literary meetings, which were held in the gardens of his friend Rucellai, where he substituted more important themes for the pleasing reveries of Plato or the disputes upon language. Being always, however, regarded with a jealous eye by the government, he was suspected of framing a conspiracy against the Cardinal John de Medicis; and Florence, who was a persecutress of her greatest men, made him suffer even torture, as we have mentioned in the History. He was, probably, reserved to undergo still greater severity, but the mind of Leo X. was too great to oppress such a man; he was not only pardoned, if indeed he was guilty, but was even employed again: he died, in the fifty-eighth year of his age, in the year 1527,—a happy event, which removed him from a view of the new disasters which befel his country, the obstinate siege Florence was exposed to, and the atrocious actions which accompanied and succeeded it. He had four sons and one daughter by Marietta Corsini; and if, as is generally supposed, he wrote the tale of the Devil Married (*Il Diavolo Maritato*) on her account, we must say that he was not even happy

in his domestic enjoyments. The elogy of his public life may be concluded with the observation that he died in an honourable poverty*.

Francis Guicciardini comes next to Macchiavel in the historical style. He was born in 1482 of a noble Florentine family, professor of laws when the university of Pisa was transferred to Florence, initiated in politics, and was continually employed in the service, either of his native country or of foreign princes, and especially of popes. He was frequently a colleague of Macchiavel in the management of the great affairs of Italy, and became his friend; and the confidential frankness with which they frequently smiled, either at the bad faith or the follies of the powerful, transpires in the reciprocal political letters which passed between them†.

He was promoted by Leo X., in difficult times, to the government of Modena, Reggio and Parma, where he evinced no less prudence than courage. He was afterwards appointed president in Romagna, and lieutenant-general of the pontifical army; and we have beheld him, in the History we have given, one of the principal actors in establishing the dominion over the Florentine states in the person of the Duke Cosmo de Medicis.

Either, however, that the latter was not sufficiently grateful to him, or Guicciardini pretended too much, and was disgusted at public affairs, he retired to his villa upon the delightful hill of S. Matthew in Avetri near Florence, and procured to himself in solitude a pleasing occupation in writing the very interesting history of Italy, which embraces a period of forty years, from the invasion

* The writers upon Macchiavel are innumerable; and amongst the last who have written are, the author of the Introduction to the Works of Macchiavel and the Chevalier Baldelli.

† Macchiav. Lett.

of Charles VIII. He was not only cotemporary with the facts related, but had a share in many of them, and as he was a statesman, he wanted nothing to become the historian of that age. He appears to have well discharged the task he imposed upon himself, for no man can be quoted whose authenticity in those events is greater than his own ; and both Italians and foreigners, at least the most sensible part of them, pay him the just tribute of praise for the veracity and impartiality he has evinced throughout his work. The cold style, adapted to the historical narration, is sometimes prolix ; minute circumstances are frequently treated too circumstantially, a very common defect in contemporary writers, who give an importance to facts in which they have seen the men of their own times so greatly interested, but who are not cared for by posterity ; the diffuse orations, even, which he frequently puts in the mouths of the persons who figure in the history, are the fruits of the imagination of the historian, and are consequently considered in our days as another defect ; but this was a tribute which almost all historians paid to the imitation of the ancients. Notwithstanding these blemishes, he is the greatest Italian historian since Macchiavel, and especially of that age.

It must not be omitted that Lord Bolingbroke, a man whose judgment has great weight, gives him the preference over Thucydides, in his Letters upon History. He is indebted for the reputation he gained, rather to that work than to the conspicuous employments he filled during his life-time, so that the gratified readers may venture to decide upon what his sepulchral inscription leaves doubtful *.

* *Cujus negotium an otium gloriosius incertum.* He died in 1540. See Elegy of Guicciardini : the inscription is of Salvini.

Macchiavel, Guicciardini, with two or three other historians, have given the palm to the Italian language in history over that of all other nations down to our times. And, in fact, where is the foreign historian, who has hitherto been able to contend with these two, and to whom we may add Sarpi and Davilæ? England alone, in latter times, has produced historians who are worthy of being confronted with them. We pronounce this opinion with the more frankness, because it is dictated by that of a foreigner, who, being formed by nature, probably, to eclipse them all, has the modesty to give the glory to Scotland of being enabled to vie with Italy: he was himself an Englishman; we mean the immortal Gibbon*.

The two Florentine historians, Bernard Segni, and Benedict Varchi, are inferior to Guicciardini. Their lives, indeed, exceed the present epoch; but as a part of them is included in it, and the histories they have written are confined at least for the greater part to it, we take the liberty of speaking of them at least as we go on. Both are very authentic in their details, because they were ocular witnesses. They saw the republic falling, the absolute government established, and described the events which accompanied them. Segni, who was versed in public affairs, was better adapted to write the history than Varchi; and indeed his design is more regular, his style is more concise, and he collects more facts in less space, extending his observations from 1527 to 1555.

Varchi, in an history which is far more voluminous, comprehends only eleven years, viz., from 1527 to 1538; the epoch, indeed, is the most interesting, because it embraces the fall of the republic and the establishment

* Gibbon, *History of Decline, &c.*, chap. 70. note 89.

of the absolute government. This work is deficient in regularity: the languid and embarrassed style he makes use of, is void of ease and historical brevity; and the frequent parentheses, like continual stumbling-blocks to the traveller, make it at once irksome and obscure. We meet too frequently with digressions, which often degenerate into monstrous excrescencies. Segni, although he was engaged in public employments, cultivated Greek and Latin literature. Varchi, a simple literato, is the author of many works, a cultivated poet, and an accurate grammarian. Tiraboschi does him great wrong in accusing him of partiality for the House of Medicis*. On the contrary, the greatest merit of the history of Varchi consists in its veracity, as it is written with a liberty which surprises us in an historian who received a stipend from that family. The republican sentiments he displays on every occasion excite our astonishment that the duke Cosmo should listen to the reading of it with so much pleasure, if we are to believe D. Silvano Razzi, a writer of his life; or if we are not to interpret the toleration shewn him by Cosmo I., and probably the encouragement given to Varchi to write with liberty against the other branch of the Medicean House, for a secret hatred he cherished at the bottom of his heart against it, and particularly against Clement VII., who, as we have seen in the past history, sought every means whereby he could exclude the legitimate branch from the government of Florence, and establish his bastards in it.

Although Greek and Latin literature were cultivated with like ardour, the study of the Italian language, which had been neglected for so long a time, arose anew: but servile imitators employed all their diligence in inter-

* Tirabos. History of Italian Literature, tom. 7. lib. 3.

mingling in their poetry the phrases and the thoughts of Petrarch, and in their prose those of Boccaccio, copying, indeed, the purity of their phrases and selection of words, (which had been neglected during the whole of the last century,) but with them, too, the manner and the embarrassment so evident in the periods, and consequently all the defects.

Monsignor della Casa may be said to have perfected the language. The present epoch boasts not of a more chaste and elegant writer, especially in prose. He unites a correctness of language to a purity and clearness of style, and at the same time is master of that natural ease which is not so easily found in the age in which he lived. His style is formed after that of Boccaccio, but is cast in a model better adapted to the genius of our own language. This is particularly the case in the two golden treatises of *Galateo* and *Uffici Comuni*, treatises which have no other defect than the insignificance of the theme. All these praises strictly apply to his orations. Their periods are more embarrassed, and have frequently the defect of those of his times, viz., a frothy verbosity, in which the few arguments adduced by the orator are dispersed, as it were dissolved, and are consequently weakened. Although they are superior to other productions of the kind, of that age, they could not be proposed as a model of eloquence.

Casa created a style for himself, not only in prose, but chose also in verse, as we have mentioned, to depart from the crowd of servile imitators, and is one of the first who opened for himself a new road, but with less success than he had done in prose; since in wishing to avoid the languid monotony produced by the imitators of Petrarch, he has fallen into another defect, viz., the far-fetched style, and the force which, in fact, he is not

deficient in, is frequently changed into a stiffness; nevertheless some of his sonnets, and particularly that of Jealousy, are more valuable than one hundred of those written by his cold contemporaries. We must pardon him for the less decent verses he wrote on account of his youthful age.

These are the merits by which Casa raises himself above the learned of his times: wherefore, although he was a very elegant Latin writer both in verse and prose, and author of translations from the Greek, we will not occupy our time with detailing the other works in which he had so many associates, who were either equal or superior to him. He was an ecclesiastic: was the son of Pandolph della Casa and Elizabeth Tornabuoni, noble Florentine families, and was born in the year 1503. He went to Rome, became Clerk of the Chamber, Archbishop of Benevento, and afterwards Nuncio to Venice, a city for which he entertained such a singular predilection, that he has written an oration upon the praises of that city, and which is probably his best. He became Secretary of State of Paul IV, and would have probably been cardinal, had death not overtaken him in the year 1556*.

The singularity attendant upon some of the circumstances of the life, and the disputes in which Claudio Tolomei found himself involved, the celebrity he enjoyed, allow us not to pass over him in silence. He was born in Sienna in the year 1492. He was well educated. The caprice which formed his character, becomes evident in the singular desire he manifested that the doctor's degrees, which he had accepted with the usual formalities, should be taken away from him with the same solemnity†. We

* Gio. Batista Casotti, *Life of Casa*.

† Brunetti *Lettere presso Tiraboschi, History of Italian Literature*, vol. 7.

have difficulty in believing this fact, since where is that university that would render itself so ridiculous as to represent such a farce? It may probably have happened that during some moments of his ill humour, contemplating either the abuse which was made of the name of doctor, or the facility in granting it, he protested he would renounce it. He was banished from his country for state reasons, and was afterwards recalled. Tolomei served those little courts of the signiors or cardinals who affected a sovereignty, who wished to have men of letters around them, without frequently possessing the means of maintaining them. Tolomei had the misfortune to wander from one to the other of these princes, like the Cardinal Hippolitus de Medicis, Pierluigi Farnese, &c., had done with little advantage to themselves, and died in the year 1554, rich in glory, and poor in substance. He was one of the most zealous patrons and promoters of the Italian language. To him, and to some of his learned fellow-citizens, we are indebted for the idea of making an addition of some letters to the Italian alphabet, whilst Trissino was meditating the same work. The latter executed it in the print of his *Sophonisba* by introducing into it two Greek letters, the *ε* and the *ω*, in order to diversify the pronunciation, with others also. The Siennese pretended that Trissino was guilty of plagiarism of their project; he endeavoured to defend himself. As far as concerns the attempt, experience must terminate questions of such kind. He was still more celebrated for having renewed the idea contemplated by Leon Baptist Alberti of writing Italian verses with Latin numbers. At the beginning he was more successful, because he had many followers; but here too experience has decided against them, that kind of verses being

abandoned for the reasons we have given in their place*.

Tolomei interfered in a third dispute, which made a great clamour at that time, viz., whether our language ought to be called Italian or Tuscan, Florentine or Sienese. We will get rid of this dispute in a few words. All places, where this language is spoken, have the right of calling it their own, and in this sense, Italian. If, however, we allude to any one province which, throughout all ages, has spoken the language as it is written, and different from other places which write it, but do not speak it, this province is certainly Tuscany ; and the language must be called Tuscan, by the same reason that the Latin was called so from Latium. There ought to be no dispute between the cities of Tuscany as sisters ; since if Florence arrogates to herself the title of being the elder sister on account of the choice of words she has made use of, the others may correct her for the excessively soft and flat pronunciation with which she is charged. Tolomei wrote many works both in verse and prose, which although they surpass not mediocrity, prove him at least to have been an elegant writer.

Upon the revival of letters, the finest and most useful institutions arose in Tuscany, particularly in Florence, and consequently we are indebted to this city for the birth of academies. The first idea, and, as it were, the image of them, may be noticed in the society of learned men, who, since the beginning of the fifteenth century, assembled in the convent of the Holy Ghost, originating probably with the learned Friar Louis Marsigli, around whom men of letters assembled, and entered into their disputations.

* See this same essay in the eulogy of Alberti.

It appears after his death, however, to have assumed still more the form of an academy. In the times of Giannozzo Manetti, assemblies were frequently held in the same place, where probably Giannozzo took the lead. Philosophical and literary questions were treated of, and the academical formality, with which they were conducted, is still farther demonstrated by the custom of affixing the theme of the day to a column, or to the wall*. This is the first notice we have of an academic assembly, which, however, bore not the name thereof. The first formal academy of Europe was the Platonic, which was instituted in Florence. We have past lightly over the philosophy in fashion in this age, nor was it the intention of this work to dwell upon it; since whether it was that of Aristotle, or of Plato, or any other sect, it dealt only in obscure words, or in the explanation of phenomena, which were not well understood; and instead of searching into nature, by making observations and experiments that she might unveil the sacred secrets she contained, Aristotle and Plato were interrogated and interpreted as oracles.

The platonic philosophy, nevertheless, although a daughter rather of imagination than of reason, appeared adorned with greater elegance; and although the society the Muses kept with it, prove it to have been exactly what it was, the systems it contained were propagated because they were embellished by poetic colouring, whilst the scholastic rudeness, maintained by difficult argumentations, would have stood in need of truth for an inseparable companion, in order to render it acceptable. The former pleased us, at least, by making an agreeable error; the latter, was melancholy

* Naldi, Naldi, Life of Jann. Manetti, Rer. Ital. Scrip. vol. 20.

foolish*. Both had their partisans in the schools, since the name of Aristotle had been long adored, a religious deference paid to it, and mournful experience has proved how frequently mankind become impassioned for what they do not understand.

Among the learned Greeks who came to the council of Florence was Gemistios Pleton, favourer of the Platonic philosophy. Cosmo, to whom he was introduced, listened to the disputation and exposition he made of the opinions of Plato with great pleasure; and their pleasing Cosmo proved the happy success of that philosophy. He chose a young man to be instructed in it, and totally devoted to it. This was Marsilio Ficino, the son of his physician †. He instituted a literary assembly, where the opinions propagated by Plato were to be expounded, which was called an academy, exactly from the name of the school of the philosopher, and of which all the Medicis were the patrons. Lorenzo, however, was the greatest patron of all; since, whenever public affairs permitted him, he assembled the academicians either in his own palace in Florence, or more frequently in his delightful villa of Careggi, and listened to their disquisitions. These academicians were the most learned men, either Florentines or foreigners, such as the celebrated Pico della Mirandola, Christopher Landino, and the Marsuppini, Leon Baptist Alberti, and others, the greater part of whom we have already taken notice of.

It is well known that Plato was accustomed to celebrate his birth-day by a solemn banquet he gave his friends, at the close of one of which he died in the eighty-first year of his age, on the 7th of November, a

* Seneca ad Lucan.

† Marsil. Fic. Oper. in Plotinum.

day which is believed to be both that of his birth and his death*, and consequently the scholars and followers of the Platonic doctrine continued down to the times of Plotinus and Porphyrius to celebrate this festival.

The Florentine Platonic academy chose, after the lapse of so many ages, to renew this celebrated anniversary. Two sumptuous banquets were given on that day, which are twice described by Ficino, and were prepared in Florence and in the Villa Careggi; Bandini presided over that of Florence, and Lorenzo de Medicis over that of Careggi. Besides the hilarity which animated the festival, themes or propositions of Plato were distributed to the guests, which they were to expound and to comment upon†. This festival became very celebrated, and was attended frequently by the most renowned literati of Italy. The apotheosis they endeavoured to make of Plato roused against him the numerous sect of the Aristotelites.

Gemistios had made innumerable followers of Plato, both in Greece and Italy, among whom was the celebrated Cardinal Bessarione, whose master he had been, and who was at once one of the ornaments of Platonic philosophy and of the cardinals. Gemistios wrote against Aristotle, and was replied to on various sides. A great many of these works, however, have not had the honour of being published, and probably do not deserve it. The Greek refugees were divided between the one and the other philosopher. Italy was much engaged in these disputes, in which frequently neither the disputants nor the listeners understood each other, because they were lost in metaphysical subtleties, in-

* The father, Edward Corsini, has demonstrated the falsity of this opinion.

† Marsil. Fic. epist. lib. 2, ad Jacob. Bracciol.

volved in obscure words: at this time, however, Plato appears to have triumphed.

Florence and Lorenzo the Magnificent gave the law to fashion in Italy: all liked to imitate so fine a model, and, consequently, Platonic philosophy triumphed over that of Aristotle, both in Florence and elsewhere. It is true that it only comprehended reveries, but these were the reveries of the virtue to which they guide, and in the midst of which excellent precepts of morality are to be found. We are taught therein to fix our chief happiness in the contemplation of the Supreme Being; to abandon low and sensual pleasures; and thus to purify our affections by turning ourselves towards heaven. This doctrine is also preached by many of the most austere recluse of our own religion. The soul's immortality is also demonstrated, together with the pure pleasures it will enjoy when separated from the body; and this doctrine is taught with so much elegance and energy, that there have been persons, who, after the reading of *Phædon*, have put themselves to death, in order to enjoy the pleasures described by the philosopher. And if it be true, as many have maintained, (since we must always interpret,) that Aristotle has preached a contrary opinion, Plato has a great advantage over him, by teaching a consolatory doctrine to mankind, particularly to virtue in misfortune, and one which may strike terror into successful criminals.

Marsilio Ficino enjoyed the greatest fame, because the Platonic philosophy, of which he was considered the most profound interpreter*, was in great credit. He was a translator of Plato, and of other Greek scholars

* We might make use of the expression of Tully: *Stoicorum somniorum vagerrimus habetur interpres*.—*De Natur. Deorum*, book 1., speaks of Chrysippus, and consequently says *Stoicorum*.

of that philosopher, and was looked upon as an oracle, around which foreigners collected in numbers. Being moulded entirely in Platonic doctrines, he sees every thing in them: the obscurities of that philosopher are mysteries in which important truths are hidden; he endeavours always to make Plato agree with the sacred Scripture, and makes use even of Bible phrases in order to interpret him. What could he do more? A veneration for the ancient Greeks made him fall into metaphysical illusions, to such a degree that he placed Pythagoras and Plato in limbo, to wait for the coming of the Messiah, and beheld the emblem of our Saviour in Socrates. These reveries, however, are adorned with a rich fund of Greek and Latin erudition, and procured for him both fame and fortune. He was bountifully provided by the Medicis with houses, lands, and ecclesiastical benefices, and was enabled to live in splendour. The same superstitious ignorance, which caused him to be accused by some of witchcraft, made him considered by others as a saint*. He was both a physician and canon†, wrote medical treatises‡, practised medicine§, but was indebted to Plato for the fame he enjoyed. Upon the fall of Platonic philosophy his celebrity fell also; he is no more than the *magni nominis umbra*||.

* Brocchi, of the Lives of the Saints and Blessed, vol. 1.

† By renunciation of Leo X.

‡ *Epidemiarum Antidotus* was written in Italian, but is found amongst his works, translated into Latin by Jerome Ricci. His other treatises are, *De Studiosorum Sanitate Tuenda*; *De Vita Producenda*. In the second, in particular, are found excellent rules.

§ See his Letters.

|| See Life of Mars. Fic. del Corsi, published by Bandini, Series of Portraits, &c.

The Platonic academy became an ornament of the Medicean family. Honoured and received in their palaces after the death of Lorenzo, and the mournful events which attended his family, it was protected by Bernard Rucellai, who gave it a splendid reception in his gardens. In these gardens the society afterwards employed itself, instead of Platonic reveries, first upon the manner of regenerating the Italian language, which was so long neglected*, until the Florentine secretary introduced other themes, which were more useful to human society, viz., those of politics†.

His profound discourses upon Livy, and many other works with which he has enriched the language, derived their origin from this assembly, which communicated profound reflections to the noble Florentines, who repaired to it in numbers, among whom were Zanobi Buondelmonti, the two Louis Alamanni, Diacceto, professor of humanity in Florence, and others. Many of these young men, however, being of too ardent a fancy, kindled by that republican fanaticism, which the Greek and Latin classics breathe, contrived a conspiracy against the cardinal, which we have described in its proper place, and which cost Diacceto and one of the Louis Alamanni their lives, whilst the other Alamanni, the poet, and Buondelmonti saved themselves by flight; and thus that celebrated assembly was unhappily dispersed.

The Platonic academy, in the mean while, had the glory of laying the foundation of many others, which almost immediately arose in Italy in imitation of it.

* See above, this same essay.

† These Rucellai gardens were celebrated for the *beaux esprits* which assembled in them, since the end of the fourteenth century, being mentioned by Francis Sacchetti, who reports a singular inscription placed in them: *Abesto dolus, malus, et juris consultus.*

The learned Cardinal Bessarione assembled, in his chambers in Rome, the finest geniuses which adorned that city, to enter into disputation, particularly upon philosophical arguments; and shortly after, Pomponio Leto founded an academy, which was rendered celebrated for the persecutions it was exposed to from the suspicious and unlearned Paul II. Pomponio was a bastard of the illustrious house San Severino, and, having given himself the classic name of Pomponio Leto, induced the other academicians to do the same. The frequent assemblies they held, and the change of names they made use of, gave umbrage to the pontiff. The greater part of the academicians were arrested as conspirators against his life, and subjected to the most cruel torments. The artifice, the weakness, the treachery, displayed by the ministers of Paul, revolt every mind which is endowed with humane feelings. These ministers, too, ashamed of having made a mistake, and not wishing readily to confess it, continued for a year after this torture, to torment many innocent persons with imprisonment*.

Among those who were overtaken by this storm, was Philip Buonaccorsi of Saint-Gemignano, who, in imitation of his companions, had assumed the name of trying Callimachus†. He, however, had the good for-

* Platin. Life of Paul II. It is true that this writer was comprehended in the misfortune, but his narration has the air of the greatest ingenuity, and is confirmed by all impartial writers of that time.

† Great stress was laid in the process, upon this change of name, the academicians being accused of being irreligious, as if they had renounced the names of saints. Ariosto, who was probably badly informed, appears to condemn the change of name in this and other academicians, in Satire 6:

tune to evade persecution by flight, and as the power of the pontiff, who had caused the unfortunate Pomponio to be led in chains from Venice to Rome, was very great, Callimachus took refuge among the infidels, and, after having passed through various islands of the Ægean to Egypt, Thrace, and Macedonia, he arrived in Poland. This accident, probably, was the cause of the extraordinary fortune which attended him. He could not shine in Italy in the midst of so many luminous geniuses, as in a land of obscurity, such as Poland was at that time. His knowledge was so universally admired, that Casimir III., sovereign of that kingdom, made him preceptor of his sons, and availed himself of his services in the most important affairs. He was sent ambassador to the Emperor Frederic III.; to the republic of Venice; and passing into Constantinople, had the dexterity to establish a truce between his king and the Turk, who threatened the kingdom of Poland with ruin. He was equally dear to his successor during the rest of his life, and he was intrusted with the most important concerns of the kingdom*.

Politics, however, made him not neglect letters. His works are for the most part histories. The most interesting of them are that of the King Uladislao, or the Rout of Varna, and that of the negotiations carried

Il nome che d' apostolo ti denno
 O d' alcun minor santo i padri, quando
 Cristiano d' acqua, e non d' altro ti fenno,
 In Cosmico, in Pomponio, vai mutando
 Altri Pietro in Pierio, altri Giovanni, &c. &c.

* Platina describes him as a man who was little fitted for business, slow, torpid, and drowsy, and it appears that his flight, the dangers he was exposed to, and the long journeys he undertook, developed those talents, which at first did not appear.

on by the Venetians, to cause the Persians to march against the Turks. He has written the Life of Attila, and many other works, which are either laid aside or unpublished; among the latter are pieces of poetry he wrote to Fannia Svetoca, as a tribute of gratitude for the generous hospitality with which she received him upon his arrival in Poland; an hospitality which he never forgot in his days of prosperity. He died in the year 1496, fifty-six years of age, and his remains were honoured with a magnificent funeral in Cracow*.

Innumerable other academies were created from the Platonic, and some of them assumed the most extravagant titles. If the former proved not very serviceable to the progress of philosophical truths, Florence had the glory, two centuries afterwards, of instituting the first academy in which nature was directly interrogated; an academy which, in the method followed, and in the diligence employed in the experiments it made, none of those created after it has been able to imitate exactly†. This may be hinted as we go on, as the examination thereof appertains not to the present epoch.

THE FINE ARTS.

WE have observed in the past epoch, upon the revival of sciences and letters, that fancy left reason behind her; or that, whilst the latter was brooding in darkness, and moving only with slow and wrong paces, the imagination displayed by Dante, by Petrarch, and

* Series of Illustrious Tuscans, vol. 1. Zeno. Diss. Voss. tom. 2.

† The academy of the Lincei, instituted by Prince Cesi, in Rome, was indeed prior to that of the Cimento; it was a philosophical academy, and of natural history particularly, but that of the Cimento was the first for natural experimental philosophy.

Boccaccio, gave a sublime flight to the Italian Muses. Poetry had been, with equal pace, accompanied by her sister arts, painting, sculpture, and architecture. The flight of the Italian Muses was arrested in the second epoch, as we have already remarked, from the causes we have indicated ; and a long pause intervened. The Fine Arts met with no obstacle, and following their successful career with an accelerated movement, arrived at the end of this epoch at their highest point of perfection, while the most sublime artists continued to arise in Tuscany, and particularly in Florence, like as Minerva issued from the brains of Jove. It is neither our intention, nor part of our plan, to give the history of the arts; but only hint at some of the first geniuses of Tuscany, describing rather the progress made by the arts, than detaining our readers with a minute detail of the lives of the artists.

Architecture had begun, since the past epoch, to abandon the barbarous style; and not having hitherto attained elegance, endeavoured to excite admiration by the grandeur of buildings, the immensity of which surprises vulgar minds, while their elegance alone penetrates the intelligent, and produces the most beautiful impression. A statue of Alexander the Great, formed by Lysippus, was better adapted to express that hero in countenance and limbs, than that which could be cut and expressed by the whole of Mount Athos, with a river in one hand and a city in the other. The glory of having changed the Gothic style, and renovated the taste for the majestic buildings of Augustus, Adrian, &c., belongs to Philip Brunelleschi, the Florentine, who was born in the year 1398. Under him the art underwent this interesting change. Nature induced

him to the study of the Fine Arts, and he gave such astonishing proofs of his powers in sculpture to Donatello, that he enchanted that great artist*.

Philip, however, perceived he had so many great rivals, both in painting and sculpture, that he could not expect to surpass them, and devoted himself, therefore, with all possible assiduity to the study of architecture. He repaired on this account to Rome, and began upon that classic ground, to study the ruinous remains of the elegant Roman buildings, which are still to be seen there, with so much diligence, that he finally restored architecture to its original beauty, and Florence admired the majesty and elegance which Brunelleschi united together, just as Athens and Rome had once beheld them. Among the many buildings raised by this great architect, the grand cupola of S. Maria del Fiore will be the most glorious monument of the talent of Brunelleschi as long as it shall be able to resist the effects of time. Its lightness, solidity, the time when it was built, a period wherein so much aid was wanting, are a sufficient reproach to the instability and weakness of that of the Vatican, which was raised more than a century afterwards, and has some time since begun to totter. The contentions Philip was continually exposed to with his fellow-citizens prove his superiority over the age in which he lived: the latter, not considering his method of execution possible, looked upon him as a madman†.

The goldsmiths' trade, which was at this time attended to in Florence more than in any other city of Europe,

* See the joke passed upon Donatello by Brunelleschi.—Vasari, Life of Brunell.

† Whilst they were consulting in the magistracy upon the work with the architects, Philip was expelled, nay, was ordered to be carried away by the force of boys.—Vasari, Life of Brunell.

furnished a great many pupils for the Fine Arts. The diligence and exactness with which gold and silver were worked, required the pupils should receive instruction both in design and in modelling*. There was not room for the numerous scholars who repaired to be initiated in so lucrative a trade: many directed themselves elsewhere, and the geniuses, formed by nature for the Fine Arts, listened in that first school to her commands, and bended to her impulse. A great number of Florentine artists, and Brunelleschi himself, began with that profession. He studied sculpture under Donatello, became a rival of Ghiberti in the models which were furnished to build the gates of St. John, a creator, as it were, of the perspective; he taught Massaccio, was an inlayer of wood, an inventor of a number of machines†, was skilled in hydraulics, and even a maker of watches‡. To these merits he united that of poetry, and some fragments of his are still read with veneration§.

Michelozzo, cotemporary with Brunelleschi, was also a scholar of Donatello. He accompanied Cosmo in his exile to Venice, and upon his return with him, was employed in various works, which were ordered to be completed by Cosmo, and particularly in the church and convent of St. Mark's. He and Brunelleschi furnished the design for a palace which Cosmo ordered to be built for his family. That of Brunelleschi appeared too magnificent for a man, whose aim it was to affect republican modesty and equality. It is to be lamented that Philip, becoming affronted, tore up his design, and no remains of it are to be found.

* Baldinucci, *Decenn.* 2, p. 1.

† See the inscription under his bust, in *S. Maria del Fiore*.

‡ Vasari, *Vite de' Pittori*. § Mazzucch. *tom. 2.* p. 4. pag. 1168.

We have already spoken of Leo Baptist Alberti; but this singular man is recalled to our memory at various times, and his name must be, at least, mentioned in the advancement of an art in which he must be considered the first on the list, for having written not only the first rules, but for having also distinguished himself in the practice of it. After these, a series of illustrious Tuscan artists follow, who are so numerous, that it would be far too tedious merely to mention their names.

The same perfection that Brunelleschi gave to architecture, was given by his master, Donatello the Florentine, to sculpture. He, too, made his art advance with a giant's step; like a new Pygmalion he infused that animation into the statues which they had hitherto wanted. He carved many statues in his native country, nor were the other cities of Italy deprived of his works; and, as he executed both in marble and bronze in the same masterly manner, he cast the celebrated horse of Gattamelata, which stands in the square of Padua. He was greatly patronised by Cosmo de Medicis, whose companion he was in his exile to Venice, received encouragement and assistance both from him and his son Piero, and lived till the age of eighty-three. He died in the year 1466. Donatello, from Vasari's testimony, had no rival in bas-reliefs either before or after him.

Lucas della Robbia became celebrated at the same time for having created an art, which unites the merits of sculpture and painting. This art is that of modelling and painting upon so refined a chalk, that it equals the beauty of porcelain without having any of its defects. He gave a varnish, or rather a glazed covering to a simple coloured earth, which has preserved the brittle chalk, after so many years, more firm against the impressions of air than marble itself. The ancient clay work of the

Etrurians had some similarity with this, but was probably inferior to it. Lucas began with the trade of a goldsmith, and devoting himself afterwards to the fine arts, he became a scholar probably of Ghiberti, cast the bronze gate of the vestry of the cathedral of Florence, and carved also in marble; but the works of his earth have rendered him immortal. This art continued to flourish for some time in his family, but to the regret of the amateurs of the fine arts was soon lost. Porcelain, which is expensive in the composition, easily changeable in the baking, and brittle at every blow it receives, cannot supply its place: it has only been able to furnish us with trifling works. Those which remain of Lucas are very numerous; but the chapel of S. James, in S. Miniato al Monte, where the Cardinal of Portugal is buried, contains the most surprising of them.

The ingenious invention of copper-plate engraving was discovered at this time in Florence. By means thereof the works of great artists have been multiplied throughout Europe; and if the original colour be wanting in the copies, and, as it were, translations, the art has been so much refined, that Morghen and Bartolozzi, with the delicacy of their burine, paint in such a manner that leaves the colours little to be desired. Thomas Finiguerra, who was also a Florentine goldsmith, is the creator of this art. As, however, contests have arisen about the original invention, especially with the Germans, it becomes necessary to give some little detail of the proofs we can adduce.

The work called *nigello*, or the art of nealing metals, was at that time in vogue in Florence. A plate of silver was excavated with the burine, painting upon the metal what was most acceptable, and the hollow places exca-

vated by the burine were afterwards filled up with a powder of copper, lead, sulphur, and other ingredients melted at the fire. The liquid having got cold, this blackish (*nigricante*) painting remained upon the silver; and the work was thence called *nigello* or *nigello*.

Finiguerra was one of the best artists of this kind. He was often accustomed to make trials before putting the mixture on it, in order to examine the hollowed places by throwing in them either very fine modelling earth or sulphur, and sometimes threw liquid sulphur upon the earth itself thus reduced to relieveo. He finally threw a black colour upon the places of the burine impressed in the silver; or, in order not to hurt the delicacy of the latter, he blackened them with smoke, and afterwards stamped them by pressing upon paper. Thus arose the printing on metal, and the first prints having casually arisen, the origin cannot be more simple. As, however, the dispute we have alluded to has been started, and large volumes have been written upon this head, it is necessary to bring together the most convincing proofs in our favour. The detail we have given has been handed down by tradition to George Vasari and Baldinucci, who have transmitted it to us; nor could we impugn its authenticity with any foundation. But as the Germans might have worked before the Florentines, it is necessary to have recourse for proofs of fact, to the epochs of these works.

Finiguerra lived from the year 1400 to 1470; and it is demonstrated from the registers existing in St. John's of Florence*, that he worked the celebrated *nigello* called of peace, (which is still to be seen) in the year 1452. Now it is certain that no copper-plate print of Germany

* Gori, Dittici, &c.

is to be found before this year, and if we chose to concede that Sandrat has not erred in the date of the print, which he believes to be of 1455*, this would still be more recent than the peace of Finiguerra. But of this *pace niellata* there really exist prints, or it may be said that they existed upon the knowledge alone that the *Nielli* of Finiguerra are a supposition of the proofs of the prints. Besides two sulphur impressions of this *pace*, one appertaining to the Chevalier Serratti, the other to Durazzo, the said Zani has found the print in folio in the national cabinet of Paris, and has caused it to be copied in the work we have quoted. There remains, therefore, no difficulty. And if any ill-omened Pyrrhonist would wish to throw a doubt upon the authenticity of this print, he must say that some impostor had drawn the design from the original *pace* of Florence, had engraved it, and then printed it; but for what reason? from hope of gain. Now not only the print of the national cabinet, but others like it would have been found, as has happened of the false edition of the Decamerone of Boccaccio of 1527 of Giunti, since gain could never be derived from one copy alone.

The document, moreover, of so singular an acquisition would have been preserved in the repositories of the cabinet, at least, by tradition; the print would have been shown with jealous curiosity; but we infer from the narration, given by Zani, that it remained unknown, and that, in fact, he disinterred it. We will lose no time in confuting the hypothetical subtleties invented by Mr. Heinecken, as the question must be decided by proofs

* Zani supposes with much probability that the two 5, a little consumed, must be taken for two 9. See *Materiali per servire, &c.*

of fact, and not by suppositions*. As we wish not to arrogate to ourselves any thing that is uncertain, we leave it doubtful whether the invention of engraving on wood belongs to the Italians or Germans. It is very ancient, and if we are to believe accounts without authentic documents, those mentioned by Mr. Zani in favour of Italy would go down to the times of Pope Honorius, who died in the year 1287, and were, therefore, prior to any German print in wood, but we will not venture to assert it boldly upon the testimony quoted by Papillon.

Metal, equally with marble, was treated docilely by the hands of the Florentine artists. Lorenzo Ghiberti constructed the metal gates of St. John with so delicate a workmanship, that Buonarrotti considered them worthy of being the gates of heaven. The Florentines, in the execution of a work of such great importance, wished, before choosing an artist, to have proofs of his abilities. The competitors with Ghiberti were Donatello and Brunelleschi. What an illustrious triumvirate! They could have made no mistake, even had they drawn the artist by lots. Upon seeing the proof offered by Ghiberti, his rivals yielded to him by common consent, a justice which is rendered only to a great man by men who are equally great.

Painting had remained somewhat behind the sister arts, when she received an extraordinary improvement, which placed her on a par with them, by means of

* Heinecken, "Idée générale d'une Collection d'Estampes, avec une Dissertation sur l'Origine de la Gravure"—Amongst other singularities, this writer, when he meets with an ancient engraver, who approaches the epoch of Finiguerra, in order to go farther down, supposes he has had a master, and wishes to begin from this supposition.

Thomas of St. John, vulgarly called Masaccio. After Cimabue and Giotto, and other fathers of painting, Paul Uccelli had begun to teach the outlines of figures ; but it was Masaccio who understood the manner of imparting to their features the natural manner without endeavour or research. To this merit he added an excellent colouring, which has resisted both time and the fire which consumed the Church of the Carmine, where his fine pictures are still the admiration of connoisseurs, yield to few of those of the better later artists, and for which the painter, who died immaturely at the age of about forty years, merited an eulogy without flattery from a poet who was capable of appreciating his merits*.

Pinsi, e la mia pittura al ver fu pari ;
 L' atteggiai, l' arrivai, le diedi moto,
 Le diedi affetto, insegni il Buonarroto
 A tutti gli altri, e da me solo impari†.

The art of incision in hard stones (*pietre dure*) was also revived in Florence in this age ; and Lorenzo the Magnificent was the patron of the art. John of the Corniole, so called from his art, also distinguished himself in it; but was afterwards surpassed by the dexterity displayed by Pier Maria of Pescia‡.

We have only mentioned the heads of schools,—or, to speak better, those who not only highly distinguished themselves above their cotemporaries in any particular art, but who successfully contributed to its advancement ; we have, therefore, omitted a number of their scholars and companions. When we consider that all the great artists we have mentioned lived at the same time

* Annibal Caro, a great connoisseur of the fine arts.

† These paintings are now engraving on copper-plate by Charles Lasinio, and are nearly finished : they are divided into seven sheets.

‡ Lives of Painters, Sculptors, &c.

in Florence, it awakens an idea of Athens and the times of Pericles. Let one short reflection be allowed us.

If Italian literature, which had been promoted in so superior a degree by the genius of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, had continued in an uninterrupted course to advance with the same ardour which it displayed upon its revival, would not the Italian language have given us productions, both in verse and prose, of the highest merit to which human genius can attain? Poliziano would, probably, have given us a poem which would have rivalled the *Æneid*. Poggio and Leonardo Brunī would have accustomed the language to the historical style. In Bernard Rucellai we should have found again the Sallustian force and brevity. Paul Cortese would have written elegies in his native language, in a style which, probably, would not have disparaged the philosophical eloquence displayed by d'Alembert. It is true, we should have been without many learned men and Greek scholars; but the evil, probably, was reparable, since the study of languages can be always undertaken. Men are never wanting who lend themselves to a work in which diligence and patience are more necessary than genius; whilst, on the other hand, when the imagination of authors has begun to soar for the particular circumstances of time and place, it is always strengthened until it arrives to its most sublime height; nor is there a more prejudicial thing than to cause it to be interrupted, and thus cool that noble ardour which is continually warming it. Experience shews how difficult it is to rekindle that fire which is once grown cold in a nation; and, in truth, since the great flights made by Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, a void has ensued, which it has not been so

easy to fill up after the lapse of many ages. I know that opinions upon this question will be various ; if I have the greater part of the learned against me, I hope I shall have some men of genius in my favour.

Lorenzo de Medicis, besides the generous subsidies he gave to Ariosto, promoted the arts also in another shape. There are those who maintain there is no precise necessity for studying the works of great artists in order to arrive at perfection, since these artists, they say, have become great without having studied others who were prior to them. Nature ought particularly to be taken for a model, and the study of her finest forms, of her features, of the physiognomy, of the passions, is the true school of an artist ; but it is also no insignificant school to behold the manner in which nature has been copied upon marble and upon metal. We may think we have well imitated her in an ugly sketch, and the great works of Phidias and of Praxiteles, if nothing else, are a criticism upon, and tacit reproach to, those of middling artists ; the study of them accelerates the progress of the art, as the study of the classics teaches us to write, and excites us to a noble emulation.

The House of Medicis collected all that Greece and Italy offered of the beautiful. The two brothers, Cosmo, father of his country, and Lorenzo, greedily purchased the finest antiquities. Donatello advised Cosmo to make this collection, and he spared no expense in making the most valuable acquisitions. Statues, marble and bronze busts, bas-reliefs, cameos, engravings, every thing, in short, that bore the character of the beautiful, was purchased by him. The fame of this passion which he encouraged, of the riches he possessed, of the generosity with which he rewarded venders, brought crowds of the

latter around him. Cosmo spent 28,000 florins, or sequins *, upon them, which was a very large sum in those times ; because, as we have frequently mentioned, it must, at least, be multiplied by five, in order to give it the value of money in our days.

Piero continued to augment the collection ; nor had his son Lorenzo any need of stimulus. He spent exorbitant sums upon it ; and the most acceptable present that could be made him was a piece of antiquity. When Pope Sixtus IV. was ambassador to him, knowing his taste, he made him a present of two ancient heads of Augustus and Agrippa ; and Lorenzo could hardly express his pleasure when Jerome Roscio, a Pistoiese, presented him with the statue of Plato, which he said he had found among the ruins of the academy.

The rich citizens of Florence imbibed the same taste ; such is the empire of fashion. Nicholas Niccoli, besides books, was a great collector of statues, gems, pictures, &c. ; and even the learned themselves, whose means were not sufficiently ample for making such acquisitions, and Poggio himself, collected Greek statues ; Florence, consequently, abounded with them at this epoch more than every other country.

Lorenzo, however, in making this stupendous collection, limited himself not to luxury and shew of ostentation ; and nothing shews his judgment more than the use he made of it. The artists of his time were hastening to perfection, and probably only some little minutiae, which complete the picture of beauty, were at this day wanting. Lorenzo, in order to incite them still more, chose to place the finest models of ancient Greece before their eyes, that they might study in them what is called

* *Fabbr. Vita Cosm.* p. 231.

the *Bello Ideale*, by which the artist succeeds sometimes even in correcting nature herself, who rarely unites in the human figure all the perfections of the limbs, which, as in the formation of the Venus of Phidias, must be chosen from many individuals: Lorenzo, therefore, caused all the finest statues which his house had collected, to be arranged in the gardens of S. Mark. He instituted an academy, which may be considered as the first of the kind, invited all the artists to the study of the antique, furnished the necessary rooms, gave the superintendence of it to Bertold, the sculptor, the favourite pupil of Donatello, and opened a noble career for the Florentine youth. Lorenzo, as a great amateur of the fine arts, frequented these gardens as much as he could, inciting the youth, who studied and executed in them, by the suavity of his manners, his unbounded liberality, and the elegant encomiums he knew so well to pass upon them. As a connoisseur of the arts, he was endowed with an exquisite taste and the finest judgment,—qualities which are very necessary indeed in a Mecænas, that he may not make a wrong use of the rewards and praises he bestows; since, when they are given to the undeserving, they create greater disgust and discouragement than a total indifference. The gardens of Lorenzo gave that perfection to the arts which they attained in Florence at the end of the fifteenth, and beginning of the following, century,—a perfection which was thence diffused throughout Europe. The writers upon the arts have always mentioned these gardens with the greatest honour*. Hence proceeded so many great artists: here the great Michael Angelo Buonarrotti received his first education, in whom, when almost a boy, Lorenzo discerned the rising traces

* Giorg. Vasi. Lives of Painters. Mengs, vol. 2. p. 99 and 109.

of genius, took a particular care of him by taking him into his own house, and keeping him at his own table.

Before we continue this short picture of the fine arts, we will detain the reader a moment with Lorenzo. He reminds us so often of the obligation we are under to mention him, upon subjects of politics, letters, and fine arts, that we hope to be pardoned on this account for a short digression; the more so, as a part of his history and that of his family, are so interwoven with that of the great artists, that it becomes necessary to speak of them conjointly. Let us contemplate the House of Medicis as the asylum of the Muses, wherein the finest intellects of the age, the poet, the Grecian, the philosopher, the sculptor, painter, and architect, were assembled. The fine arts and literature have a close connexion with each other: the poet could direct the imagination of the artist; the learned man furnish light, and verify with historical truth, the images conceived by the former; the painter, the sculptor, the architect, make an interchange of their acquirements, and mutually aid each other: no knowledge could be wanting in so learned an assembly; no fine conception could be lost for want of execution; and in the attrition, as it were, of so many great geniuses, new and luminous sparks were continually breaking out.

All these illustrious men had constant access to the table of Lorenzo, at which it was a rule, in order to remove all vain ceremony of precedence, that those who arrived first should take their seat, one by one, in the place that common opinion considered the most distinguished. No extravagant luxury of ostentation, but a wholesome abundance, united with the decent frugality adapted to a house of commerce*, reigned at those

* Condivi, Life of Michael Angelo.

banquets, and the guests themselves were the best sauce*.

Here the imagination may figure to itself what frequently happened; Lorenzo, Poliziano, Landino, the young Buonarrotti, Pico della Mirandola, and other illustrious artists and learned men sitting by the side of each other. Lorenzo, full of that wit and fire which distinguished him, imparted his animation to those banquets; nor do I know where we can suppose any thing to have been similar to them, either in Greece, ancient Rome, or elsewhere. Let us compare only one of these entertainments with the formal banquets of modern times, where persons, frequently badly selected, who are not rarely enemies to each other, sit loaded with gold and gems, without appetite, either to contemplate or to envy the ostentation which the master of the house makes of his riches, who wishes them to be admired, and insults the wretched, whilst ennui is continually offering up prayers for a speedy termination of the ceremony.

Modesty, which forms so rare an ornament in a man of such vast riches, of such power and intelligence, was the inseparable companion of Lorenzo. Although he was endowed with that refinement of taste, which is capable of perceiving the beautiful of all the arts, he always

* We may read an anecdote of the judicious frugality of Lorenzo, in the dissertation upon the coins of Borghini. When Franceschetto Cibo, his daughter's husband, came to Florence, he was lodged in his house, whilst his noble retinue was placed in a separate one. The husband was astonished at the parsimony of Lorenzo's table, and dreaded that his companions, who were accustomed to the Roman and Neapolitan luxury, would laugh at it; but learnt afterwards that they were treated with greater magnificence. Upon interrogating Lorenzo upon the difference, he received for answer, that he was considered one of the family, for whom no alteration was made.

listened to the artists like a scholar, with reverential deference. His knowledge of, and acquirements in, architecture were great ; and foreigners, as well as his fellow-citizens, frequently consulted him thereon. He had the modesty to be diffident of his own wisdom, and never undertook any building without consulting the opinion of the wisest architects. He made use of the work of San Gallo in the construction of the villa of Caiano, one of the finest monuments of the magnificence of Lorenzo. He raised the sumptuous edifice upon a hill which commands a vast and fertile plain, and appears formed more by art than nature, bathed by the winding Ombrone*, in a manner that horses can mount to all the stories †.

The great hall, painted by the most celebrated Florentine pencils, is at once a proof of his designing modesty ; since, instead of openly decorating it with the actions performed by the family, which every middling citizen wishes to do, he caused Roman histories, allegorical, under a veil, of the glorious events which distinguished the house, to be described therein. Thus, in the applause with which Cicero is received by the Romans upon his return from exile, every person may recognise the joy evinced by Florence upon the return of Cosmo ‡: in the presents of rare animals offered to Cæsar by Egypt, we meet again with the presents of the Soldan to Lorenzo §; in the supper given to Scipio by Syphax, king of the Numidians, we discover the reception given Lorenzo by Ferdinand, king of Naples, although his enemy ||; and, finally,

* The villa has been called Ambra, from that river, by Poliziano.

† *Quæque sine exemplo Cajana palatia Laurens*
Ædificat quorum scandal fastigia tanquam
Per planum ire sequens partesque equitabit in omnes.—VERINI.

‡ Painting of Franciabigio.

§ Of Andrea del Sarto.

|| Of Pontormo. See Borghini, *il Riposo*, book 4.

in the painting of Titus Flaminius, who is making an oration in the congress of the Achæans against the ambassador of the Ætolians and king Antiochus, and advises not the alliance, we discern the magnificent Lorenzo, who, in the diet of Cremona, defeated the designs entertained by the Venetians *.

In Careggi, which was a villa he destined particularly to philosophy, uniting elegance with instruction, he cultivated a garden of exotic plants, the list of which is so long that it would appear rich even in present times; since, according to the description given by Alexander Bracci, all that Asia and Africa could produce of the most rare was to be found in it †. He was an amateur of music, in which Anthony Squarcialupi in those times had no rival, and he wrote pretty verses in his praise.

Upon reflecting what this man has done to promote arts and letters, and to what a degree of splendour he has brought them, we shall see that no man of equal merit with him has ever appeared among the ranks of princes; that, superior to all of his own family, he is the dearest ornament of that name; and that the Medicean age must be marked by him, and not by his son. He was the first statesman of the age in which he lived, the principal patron of every kind of science, of literature, of the fine arts, one of the first of poets and literati of his day. He has done much, and in a very short time, as he died in his forty-second year.

* Of Pontormo, both painted after the death of Lorenzo.

† The description is in an elegy of Alexander Bracci, addressed to Bernard Bambo, preserved in the Laurentian library, and published by Roscoe in his appendix to the Life of Lorenzo, and which deserves to be read on account of the minute description given of the exotic plants in that garden, some of which are not known to modern botanists.

Upon considering the merits he possessed, we can apply to him with the greatest justice those fine verses of Ariosto, which are not well suited to the cardinal Hippolito D'Este.

Quegli ornamenti, che divisi in molti,
A molti basterian per tutti ornarli,
In suo ornamento avea tutti raccolti
Costui di ch' hai voluto ch' io ti parli :

and the first three verses, with little change of the third, might be affixed to his statue. And why has not this hero, who has deserved so much from his country, a statue in a city which has been so prodigal of public monuments to persons who are far less meritorious? Is not this an ingratitude evinced not only by the citizens, but also by the lovers of the fine arts which are so greatly indebted to him? Hardly will foreigners believe that there is no tomb for Lorenzo in the temple of that name, among the mausoleums which are pompously raised to many personages of the Medicean family*; and that the hand of Michael Angelo, which has operated in so masterly a manner upon that of his son and unworthy nephew, should have forgotten his first benefactor.

Probably, however, it would be more proper that the ashes of Lorenzo should repose in the church of the Holy Cross, (*Santa Croce*,) in company with those great men who did honour to the century in which he lived. There was a time when it was under contemplation to adorn the four angles of the square of *Santa Croce* with the four statues of the four Florentines who, taken collectively, far surpass whatever any kingdom of Europe can shew; viz., Dante, Buonarrotti, Macchiavel, and Galileo,

* See note at the end of the volume.

with the statue of Lorenzo in the centre of the square ; and had they wished to add to the associates of those four sublime geniuses, Florence, besides Petrarch and Boccaccio, could have furnished as many as the place required. A prince who deserved a better fortune, on account of the virtues which distinguished him, and the love he bore towards his subjects, was pleased with the idea, and wished to carry it into execution, but the misfortunes which befel Tuscany prevented him. Those five statues would be to a foreigner, a tacit, but the greatest, eulogy of Florence.

The sons of Lorenzo inherited the taste of the father for arts and letters, but not the genius which distinguished him. Piero, the elder, was the most unlike his father. We have described the political vicissitudes which marked his career in the proper place ; we have seen how scantily he was endowed with political talents ; and how soon the ancient power of the Medicis was ruined by the errors he committed. The impulse which his ancestors had already vigorously given to arts and letters made them continually advance. Piero laid no impediment in their way ; on the contrary, during the short period of his government he favoured them : but he was without those great qualities which we have seen to be so necessary to a Mecænas, and which were all concentrated in Lorenzo. Buonarrotti continued to live in his house, and Piero made him exercise himself in forming statues of snow in his court-yard *.

Leo X., who was more like his father in taste, and his rival in magnificence, is deservedly celebrated as one of the principal patrons of literature and the fine arts. We will not repeat what we have already said at length

* Condivi, Life of Michael Angelo.

upon him in the proper place, in tracing out his character; we there observed that he has given his name to a glorious epoch which calls to the memory the Augustan age; but this glory is owing in great part to his father. It was the good fortune of Leo to see, under his reign, those fruits brought to perfect maturity, which were cultivated by his house, and particularly by his father; and if Heaven had granted him the life of his grandfather, Lorenzo himself might have been a spectator of the completion of the fine enterprises he contemplated. Viewing at that time the triumph of the fine arts, and the son arrived at the most sublime post, and continuing to direct the Florentine republic, unhappy Italy would probably have been spared a great part of the misfortunes which befel her.

Lorenzo deserved indeed the name of magnificent: Leo carried this virtue to prodigality, by having frequently dissipated the treasures of the Vatican, in making large donations alike without reflection, both to great men and buffoons. At his death he left the pontifical treasury exhausted and in debt. The magnificent Julius, who was probably more like Lorenzo than all, lived too long out of his country, and had little share in the government, to be able to display the beneficent intentions he possessed. Clement VII. degenerated not from the family; but the misfortunes in which he found himself involved suffered him not to make known his favourable disposition towards literature.

Of the two young men who were destined for the government of Florence, the cardinal Hippolitus truly inherited the magnificent and liberal disposition which distinguished the House of Medicis. He was richly provided with church wealth, but made it subservient to assist men of letters. He was also a poet, and was no

inelegant translator of the second book of Virgil. He loved poets. He possessed also some of the singularities which marked pope Leo. He caressed buffoons, or persons who had any extraordinary quality, either of body or of mind. The answer he gave to Clement VII. is very memorable. The latter, knowing the extraordinary number of men of letters whom he maintained at his court, when he was in Bologna, caused him to be advised to make a reform, as so numerous a court was not at all necessary for him: Hippolitus replied to him, that he did not keep them because he had need of them, but because they stood in need of him.

In interweaving the history of the progress made by the arts with that of their Mecænases, one reflection presents itself to us. By what strange exception has it occurred, that the name of one of the greatest geniuses that nature, as well as Tuscany, has produced, viz., that of Leonardo da Vinci, is not united to that of the Medicis? He did honour to this epoch. He was the son of Piero, a notary of the signiory of Florence, by an illegitimate alliance, and was born in the year 1452. He had received from nature one of those most rare and active talents which penetrates into the depth of every science or art to which it devotes its attention, and he discovered new roads in them: and he consequently excelled, not only in those to which he applied his mind, but became an inventor. We see him rapidly becoming painter, sculptor, architect, mathematician, a natural philosopher, hydraulician, mechanist, musician, and a poet. He has furnished us with essays on all those arts and sciences which, taken even separately, announce the high genius with which he was endowed. Nature, too, was partial to him in the distribution of her favours, and he united to these qualities, an elegance of appearance,

beauty, and proportion of limbs, qualities adapted to render the former even still more beautiful*. When placed to the study of design, when a young man, by Andrew Verocchio, the first attempts he made astonished that celebrated painter. Geniuses like his have little want of masters. Full of activity, incapable of enjoying his ease, any art or science to which he devoted himself was play to him, and it is consequently no wonder that he embraced so many. Lewis the Moor had the honour of appointing him to his court in Milan with an honourable salary.

After Massaccio, Leonardo advanced painting by a new and grand step. We are indebted to him for the strength of design, and the fierce and terrible expression, wherein he was the precursor and master of Michael Angelo, as he was of Raphael in that gracefulness which enchant us †. The Supper of the Redeemer which he painted in the convent of the Holy Mary of the Graces, (*Santa Maria delle Grazie,*) in Milan, is one of those paintings with the merits of which all Europe resounds. It is a picture, which has suffered greatly from barbarism, and which the burine of one of the most illustrious artists has immortalized by multiplying the copies of it. It being painted upon the wall has alone saved it from the rapacious hand of foreigners, but king Louis XII., upon contemplating it, entertained an idea of cutting the wall, and transporting this great painting into France ‡. The magnificent model of the horse for the statue of Francis Sforza, Duke of Milan, was never fully executed, but was broken to pieces by military brutality, in the

* “ Gratior et pulchro veniens in corpore virtus.”—VIRG.

† Mariett. Letter. Pittor. tom. 2.

‡ Lorus de Leonardo Vincio. Tiraboschi Hist. of Ital. Lett. om. 7. page 4. Lanzi, instead of Lewis, names Francis I.

invasion of that city. The Cartoons worked at Florence, expressing the battle of Anghiari against Nicholas Piccino, and other enterprises of the republic, which were to be painted in the saloon of the old palace, were not executed and are lost, to our great misfortune, after having at least served as a school to Michael Angelo and Raphael.

If Leonardo be not the first constructor of the celebrated canal of the Martesana, in Lombardy, he has, according to universal testimony, excavated and directed other very useful ones. He went to France, was cherished by king Francis, and being visited by that king in his last illness, he expired between his arms*. He wrote the treatise upon painting, which is in high esteem with theorists and practitioners. We discover therein a hint of the Newtonian doctrine of colours, since he asserts that white is not a colour, but the abode of all colours.

Many of his writings are still unpublished, and are full of new views, of new machines either for hydraulics, or mechanism, or the art of war, wherein common geniuses will probably discover visions. One of these is the project he proposed for raising the temple of St. John, which time, by insensibly accumulating the surrounding ground, has left depressed: he conceived the idea of forming a stair around it. But there are works which are impossible for middling architects to execute, and which prove easy to sublime ones. This project of Leonard will

* This fact is now doubted. See Amoretti's Historical Memoirs upon the Life and Studies of Leonardo da Vinci. Lomazzo asserts that the king received an account of it from Melzi, and shed tears upon it. Venturi, moreover, consulting the journal of Francis I., in Paris has discovered that the king was not at Amboise when Leonard died there.

be laughed at, in the same manner as we would laugh at any man who proposed to transport the tower of Giotto into another place: nevertheless a similar work has been executed in Bologna, exactly in the age of Leonardo. Aristotle Fioravanti, or the son of Fioravante, moved the tower of the church of Masone, which was sixty-five feet high, together with the foundation, from its place, and drew it forward about thirty-five feet. There are so many authentic proofs, and so many ocular witnesses of this event, that it cannot be doubted*. The same architect also made a tower, which hung over five feet and a half strait.

It is beyond all doubt that Jeremiah Lerzoni, in the last century, raised the tower of Rotterdam, made the foundations, and replaced it again upon them; consequently, a genius like that of Leonardo, might well raise the edifice of St. John.

The little credit given to these facts, which are still very certain, is a satire upon, or, at least, a reproach to, our weak mechanism; in our days when mechanical theories have made such progress, and the principals thereof have been so well demonstrated and extended, amidst such a light, which has been thrown upon mathematics, no man probably in Europe will venture to repeat the experiment made by Fioravanti which was undertaken without the modern improvements; and Lagrange, the illustrious author himself of the most sublime mechanical theory, would not venture to carry it into execution. The ancients have done in mechanism far more than the moderns, although the former were ignorant of the subtle demonstrations which so much

* *Cronica Bolognese.* Murat. Rer. Ital. Scrip.

occupy our attention. Is not this a sign of what little use they are to human society, and that natural genius and experience perform every thing? It cannot be denied there is not a kind of useless luxury also here, and the difficulties, which flatter human pride, being overcome is not always the cause of advancing useful truths*.

Returning to Leonardo, the academy of fine arts in Milan was founded by Lewis the Moor, under his direction. He was one of the most able improvvisatori of his age, skilled in music both vocal and instrumental, and was enabled to accompany his own verses with the latter: he invented a new instrument† which astonished the musicians and players of Lewis. He made many entertaining discoveries. He built a heaven for the nuptials of John Galeazzo with Isabella of Arragon, with so much art that all the planets in the figure given them turned round in astronomical order and regulation, each figure enclosing a musician, who sang the praises of the bride and bridegroom. Nor was the lion less ingenious, which he built and displayed either in Milan or Paris, before King Francis I., which lion, after having walked

* Petrarch (*Triumph of Death*, cap. 2,) appears to allude to this idea in the following verses :

Pur delle mille un' utile fatica,
Che non sien tante vanità palesi
Ch' intende i vostri studii, si mel dica.

† It was, for the most part, of silver of the form of a horse's skull. Vasari relates that the sound of this instrument surpassed that of all the musicians who were assembled here to play. One reasonable objection probably may be made; how can an instrument, which possessed so much merit, have been afterwards forgotten? Examples are not wanting of this neglect in more useful arts. Habit governs mankind, nor is it easy to make them adopt a novelty.

through a room, by mechanical contrivance, opened and displayed itself full of birds who were flying about*. Nature, in order to finish one of those works she rarely forms, had imparted to Leonardo, as we have already said, a beauty of countenance adorned with all the graces of the mind, and no common eloquence. He was great in many arts and sciences ; but probably had he limited himself to a smaller number of objects, without so much distracting his mind, we can hardly imagine the height to which he would have carried whatever art he thus cultivated.

Baccio della Porta of Savignano, a village near Prato, was an imitator of Vinci: his thoughts were turned from painting by the fanatical discourses of Savonarola, and the danger to which he was exposed at the attack of the convent of S. Mark induced him to put on the Dominican habit, and assume the name of Friar Bartholomew. Tuscany abounds with his pictures, which are, at times, majestic, at others delicate, and characterize the painter as one of the greatest in the Florentine school. It is evident that he possessed that grace, which many deny to this school, from the mistake, (amongst other proofs which might be adduced) made by Pietro da Cortona, who thought a painting of Bartholomew, which is in the palace Pitti, was a work of Raphael, who was the

* These contrivances call to our recollection a wonderful fact related by Abulfeda, when the ambassador of the Greek emperor was received at Bagdad by the caliph Moctadar, in the year of the Christian æra 917, a period of the great splendour of the Arabian monarchy. Among the other magnificent articles of astonishing luxury, there was a tree of gold and silver, which opened of itself into twelve principal branches, upon which, and other smaller boughs, little birds of various kinds in gold and silver sang with their natural warbling tone.

sovereign master of gracefulness. Raphael, during his sojourn at Florence, took lessons of the art from the friar, and disdained not afterwards to put his hand to the figure of the Apostles, which was left imperfect in Rome by the friar! Being censured for a painter of too minute forms, he, at once, astonished and silenced the envious with the gigantic figure of S. Mark, which approaches the sublimity of Michael Angelo, and the colouring is such that even Raphael might have learnt something from it.

By the side of Leonardo and the friar, we must place Andrew Vannucci, and thus form an illustrious triumvirate. Vannucci was more commonly called Andrew of the *Tailor* (*Andrea del Sarto*) from being the son of a man who carried on this trade. He was born in Florence in 1488, and being instructed by a middling master, he is one of the frequent examples that nature is able to effect more than art. Under him Tuscan painting was carried to the summit of perfection. He was most correct in design, and received the name of Andrew without errors. The cloisters of the Annunziata especially are a sacred gallery, wherein the Florentine school makes a noble display. The supper in S. Salvi possessed the power of arresting the fury of the brutal soldiery, who, when besieging Florence, were demolishing that convent, which in mercy to that painting was partly saved. Those persons who, in conceding to the Florentine school the superiority in correctness of design, and robustness of expression, deny it gentleness and grace, are tacitly confuted upon contemplating the paintings of Vinci, of the friar, and of Andrew. This is a merit which gives a finish to the work. The limbs of an Apollo or a Venus may be scrupulously expressed according to the rules of design united to the most elegant

choice of colours ; but if gracefulness is wanting, they are without the final touch. It is a Venus, but a Venus without the girdle. What is this gracefulness, which penetrates the heart, enchanting the soul, and throws a light over all the limbs, which renders them more amiable? More is really felt than can be described ; if it be lawful to define it, there appears in the figures to be a gesture in the smallest traits of the face, and in the movement of the limbs which describe the gentleness of the mind, and tacitly breathe a pleasure ; we may apply to them these verses :

Illam quidquid agit vel quo vestigia flectit, &c.

Leonardo has been a master of this enchanting art ; Friar Bartholomew and Andrew possessed it ; Raphael carried it to perfection. He had a rival in Correggio, who probably stopped not always at that point where the defect or the laboured style begins. The decorous gracefulness in painting has been created in Tuscany ; and, if the innumerable artists of this school have afterwards attached themselves more to design and expression, we are not on that account to deny that merit to the place where it arose. Who will say, upon contemplating the elegant and smiling countenances of the Madonnas, and so many children of Andrew, that he is without gracefulness ? Those easy and elegant features (says a judicious writer) often remind us of Correggio* ; and who does not discover upon the picture which adorned the convent of the nuns of Lago in Mugello, and which is now in the tribune of the royal gallery†, a strength of expression in the movement of the grieving

* Lanzi, *Historicals of Painting*.

† The painting was taken to the Palace Pitti in 1794, afterwards in 1799 to France.

virgin conjoined with gracefulness, which is an union so difficult to be effected? To what picture does the Madonna, called *del Sacco*, yield, which is executed with so much care, and at the same time facility, if indeed not to that of the *Seggiola* of the former painter, of whom, as the same historian says, he is rather a rival than second to? The labours of Andrew are, probably, too numerous; rarity not seldom increases their value. How far his style resembled that of Raphael is proved by the trick played by the House of Medicis upon the Duke of Mantua, who wishing greatly for the portrait of Leo X., a work of Raphael, which the Medicis possessed, Andrew was secretly employed to copy it, and it was sent as the original. George Vasari, who was privy to the secret, being some time afterwards at Mantua, where Giulio Romano was painting, the latter wished to shew George that picture as one of the most rare paintings. Although the latter kept the secret, he, nevertheless, could not refrain from asking Giulio if he really thought it to be a work of Raphael. "Do not doubt of it," he replied; "and look at this feature,—I did it when I assisted Raphael*.

Andrew, being called to France by King Francis I., was received in that country with honours and presents; being impatient, however, of seeing his wife again, who had great influence over him, he only obtained from the

* *Life of the Painters.*—After this story, we shall no longer be astonished at the mistakes made in judging of the authors of paintings; we shall rather wonder at the frankness with which people decide upon them. They say, there is the cipher and the name of Andrew upon the rough of the board, enclosed by the cornice, and that George, when still a boy, who studied with Andrew, saw him secretly work it, and made it known to Giulio Romano.—See Andrew's Life, by Vasari.

king permission to revisit his native country with great difficulty, and with the promise of an oath soon to return: but his promises were vain, and Andrew died immaturely, at the age of forty-two, in his native land, in the year 1530, a victim, probably, to the siege of that city*. His want of faith irritated the king against the Florentine artists to such a degree, that he would no longer hear them spoken of. He was afterwards appeased, however, upon hearing of the great merits of some of them, and again enticed them into France.

Among the latter, there is one of the most singular men, both on account of the merits he possessed and the caprices of his character: this is Benvenuto Cellini. His first trade, like that of many illustrious Florentines, was that of a goldsmith, and he was the greatest that has ever been in that art. His conjunction of gems, coined medals, little figures in bas-reliefs, or whole ones, in the most graceful and capricious attitudes, were highly celebrated†. From these little works he suddenly advanced to form gigantic statues, casting the bronze with the masterly hand of a Lysippus, a change as great as that of a poet, who, from writing spirited epigrams, would, on a sudden, raise himself to the sublime style of epic verses. Industrious as he was, the more he was of a capricious and extravagant character, ready to quarrel, and make use of his hands. When King Francis I. called him to France he was in prison in Rome, and the pontiff, Paul III., liberated him out of respect to that sovereign. Although he was honoured and rewarded at the court of France, he always maintained the extravagance of his character, and nothing less than the goodness of that sovereign could have borne

* Baldinucci Decenn. 1.

† George Vasari, tom. 2.

with him. He returned to Florence, and died at an advanced age in the year 1570*. He has furnished a lively picture of himself in the life he has written, which is a very pleasing book for the description he has given of his own times, and for that sincere nature with which he displays himself without perceiving his own defects; and if he fills it up with some lies, they are easily visible through the veil which the artless style, in which it is written, renders very transparent. He has been no despicable poet; and, among the crowd of imitators of Berni, Benvenuto must not be placed amongst the least.

The concourse of painters, sculptors, and architects, who were not mediocre, but even illustrious, is attested by the innumerable documents they have left behind them, besides the history given us of the fine arts by Vasari and Baldinucci. Florence abounds not only with sumptuous edifices which have given space to architects to display their sublime invention, but also with small buildings which evince the taste the inhabitants of the city possessed for the fine arts, since we also frequently discover in a little façade of only three windows a great trace of the art. We meet, throughout the neighbourhood of Florence, with the paintings of Pontormo, of Passegnano, of Andrew himself, in places which are but little known, and in the most deserted churches; so true is it that, when riches abound, they are thrown even where they should not be.

We cannot better conclude this sketch of the progress of the fine arts, for which Europe is indebted to Tuscany, than with the name of Michael Angelo

* It is true that the epoch of which we are employed, finishes at 1539; but we have reserved to ourselves the liberty of speaking of those who lived in it a good part of their life, and were celebrated in it

Buonarrotti, who united them all in the highest possible degree of perfection. Nature appears, in forming this man, to have wished to carry the liberal arts to the furthest point at which they were capable of arriving since their revival, since the mark to which this man carried them was never passed. Our proposition, probably, will appear bold ; but we venture to assert, that ancient Greece never produced such a man, since we are acquainted with none who exercised the three sister arts with so much applause. A judicious connoisseur of the capacities of ancient and modern warriors has said, that the Duke of Marlborough and Prince Eugene put together formed one Cæsar ; it will be necessary to find three of the most excellent in the three arts, in order to compose one Michael Angelo ; and, except in painting, we should know not who to name in the other two since the revival of the arts. Of such a man, of whom it would be proper to say so much, it is better to say little, and invite mankind to contemplate his works which speak his true praise. His merits were the grand, the sublime, the majestic. Leonardo da Vinci had given the first proofs thereof ; but they were carried by Michael Angelo to the utmost point at which the art can arrive. To heighten the eulogy, it may be said that he had no equal since the revival of the arts in sculpture and in architecture. In painting, Raphael D' Urbino, the greatest painter the world has produced, was probably his superior ; and he has formed his character partly in the Florentine school. The lessons of Pietro Perugino had only faintly aroused the genius of Raphael : the views of the magnificent traits and the graces of Leonardo da Vinci, and of the sublimity of Michael Angelo, amply extended his imagination, like one accustomed to be kept within the walls of a small town, transported suddenly to a vast city

or upon the top of the Alps, whence he may contemplate an immense horizon.

Two of the most celebrated models were in Florence, the two cartoons of Leonardo da Vinci and Michael Angelo Buonarrotti, with which, executed afterwards in colours, it was chosen to adorn the great hall of the palace of the government. They represented two glorious battles which had been fought by the Florentine republic. Leonardo designed that of Anghiari, in which Piccinino was beaten. Michael Angelo, working in competition after that great artist, upon a similar subject, endeavouring to surpass him, called into action all the strength of his genius. He designed the battle between the Florentines and the Pisans, led on by Auguto, which took place a little distance from Pisa, and along the banks of the Arno. History relates, that during the great heat of the summer, a part of the Florentine army were bathing in the Arno, when Manno Donati, foreseeing that they would be attacked, and supplying the part of the negligent general, made them hasten to take up arms. This circumstance furnished Buonarrotti with an opportunity for displaying his talents in designing the naked limbs; and it was agreed that he far surpassed his antagonist. Why was not this great work executed? The grand saloon would then vie with the Vatican rooms, and Florence would be able to shew two originals, which, in grandeur, force and majesty, would indicate the summit of perfection. Not only the work was not executed, but the cartoons were unhappily lost, not without suspicion having arisen that envy had caused one of them to disappear*; and both those great geniuses went elsewhere to exercise their talents. As long as the

* The suspicion falls upon Baccio Bandinelli.

two cartoons existed they were the school of Florentine painters, and of foreigners who repaired thither to warm their imagination. Strength, says Pliny, was more agreeable to Zeuxis of old, than grace, and he was therefore compared to Homer*. For a similar reason Michael Angelo has been compared with Dante, of whom he was a great admirer†. They resemble each other in colouring and in design: the greatest strength and expression, more than gracefulness, reign in both. They are not unlike each other also in the difficulties of being imitated. Of the successful imitators of Dante there are very few who fall not into the forced or far-fetched style, defects which approach the style of that great poet: the same happened to the followers of Michael Angelo. We have seen that Dante is not entirely without softness and sweetness of style: the twenty-eighth canto of the *Purgatorio*, the *History of Frances of Rimini*, are an example thereof: and in the Sixtine chapel, in the midst of the magnificent sibyls and prophets, upon whose countenances and features inspiration is painted, the gentle Eve, who is turning herself towards her Creator in a mild attitude of gratitude, breathes a grace, which proves that whenever the powerful and robust imagination of Michael Angelo could bend itself to softness, it was capable of doing so.

The dark and terrible tints of the Universal Judgment awaken in us the idea of the Hell of Dante; and the defect of his colouring is hardly discovered in these great pictures, where strength and sublimity so much enrap-

* *Zeuxis plus membris corporis dedit, id amplius aut augustius ratus: atque ut existimant. Homerum sequutus, cui validissima quæque forma etiam in fæminis placet.*—*Plin. lib. 12. c. 10.*

† See the article of Dante, second essay.

ture the spectator as not to give him leisure to perceive it. It is necessary to view his great statues, rather than hear them described; they easily speak and infuse into the soul of the observer the sublimity which the artist has expressed in them. Florence and Rome possess many of them; the night, the day, the morning, the twilight, upon the tombs of Duke Lorenzo and of Julius de Medicis, in the vestry of S. Lorenzo; and above all, the statue of Lorenzo himself has been composed by a poetical imagination, and by the greatest art; but is there a statue, modern or ancient, which surpasses the great Moses of S. Peter in *vinculis*, which has so often animated even poets to describe its grandeur*?

If the celebrated Olympic Jove were in existence, I am certain he would be placed by the side of it, and judges probably would be divided upon their merits. It is necessary, however, that judges be free from the prejudice of thinking it impossible that the moderns can equal the ancients, as if nature did not form the same geniuses; as if (says a spirited author) the trees of ancient Greece or Rome were not equalled by trees of modern days. All disputation with such persons is useless, but that Buonarroti attained the art of the Greeks was the opinion of those before whom was placed the Amorino which had been disinterred, of which the cunning artist had reserved to himself a finger, upon the appearance of which all, and among the rest the divine Raphael himself, were thrown into tacit confusion. We shall content ourselves with making Michael Angelo a rival to the best Greeks: a man equally famous in literature and the fine arts, and who held the ancients

* See, amongst the rest, Zappi and Lorenzini.

in great esteem, has gone further by making him superior*.

The most sumptuous edifice in the world, the church of St. Peter's, speaks sufficiently in praise of his merits in architecture; he was the architect of it, although the additions which have been made to it have somewhat altered its noble proportions. The design of the great cupola, in which he attempted to surpass Brunelleschi, was only executed after his death by Giacomo della Porta: this great work of architecture makes it unnecessary for us to speak of many others. Michael Angelo was sought after by sovereigns and republics, and honoured according to his merits: the rude distinctions paid to him by the clownish Julius II. form a contrast to the mild manners evinced towards him by Paul III., who, in order to induce him to undertake the great work of the Universal Judgment, went to visit him in his own house with ten cardinals. The honours paid to his ashes in Santa Maria del Fiore were royal, nor have we ever seen the three sister arts bewail their loss with better reason, than upon his sepulchre in *Santa Croce*. This patriarch of the Fine Arts enjoyed a very long life, and died eighty-nine years old, in the year 1563, and, consequently, rendered two centuries illustrious.

It has been said, that every good author should leave off his work at the completion of his principal *chef-d'œuvre*, and, therefore, carrying in some degree this law into execution, we cannot better conclude the picture of Tuscan Arts in this epoch, than with Michael Angelo.

* Monsig. Bottari. Notes to the Life of Michel Angelo, by Vasari. Buonarroti has far surpassed the Greeks, whose statues, although greater than nature, have not succeeded so well.

DOCUMENT.

A LETTER FROM NICHOLAS MACCHIAVEL TO FRANCIS VETTORI,
AMBASSADOR AT THE COURT OF ROME.

Illustrious Sir.

Divine favours were never late, (Tarde non furon mai grazie divine.) I make use of this expression because it appeared to me not that I had lost, but had escaped, your favourable notice, as you have been a long time without writing to me, and I was doubtful whence the cause could arise. And I paid little attention to all the causes thereof, which arose in my mind, with the exception of that, that it might have been written to you, that I was not a good steward (*Massaio*) of your letters, and I well knew that, with the exception of Philip* and Paul, no other person had ever seen them.

I am quite rejoiced at your last letter of 23d ult., and I am very much satisfied at seeing how regularly and peaceably you execute the duties of the office intrusted to you, and I advise you to continue in this way ; because whoever abandons his own convenience for that of others, loses his own, and for attending to that of others is hardly thanked. And because Fortune must do every thing, let her alone, be quiet, give her no opposition, and wait that she may allow mankind to do something for themselves : then indeed it may be worth your while to undergo more fatigue, watch more over matters, and for me to leave my villa, and tell you, *here I am.*

* These few notes are added by the editors for the better understanding of the text, upon which the readers will make their own opportune reflections. This Philip is spoken of again at note, page 441.

Wishing, however, to do you an equal favour, I cannot tell you more in this letter, than what is the nature of the life I lead; and if you think it is worthy of being exchanged for yours, I am happy to do so.

I am at my country seat*, and since the accidents† which have latterly happened to me, have not been, for twenty days, at Florence. Hitherto I have amused myself with giving chase to the thrushes with my own hand, rising before day-break; I laid my nets, and went after them even with a bundle of cages upon my back, that I looked like Geta, when he returned from the port with the books of Amphitryon; I took always, at least two, at the most seven, thrushes. Thus I passed the whole of September; when this amusement, strange and whimsical as it may appear to you, ceased to my displeasure, and I will now tell you what life I have led since.

I rise with the sun, and repair to one of my woods, which I am now about cutting down, where I remain two hours to view the work that has been done the day before, and by way of pastime among those woodcutters, who have always some misfortune at hand to tell me of, which has happened either to themselves or their neighbours. And I would have to tell you a thousand pretty things about this wood‡, which have occurred to me both with Frosino, Panzano and others, who wished to have a part thereof. And Frosino particularly sent for certain loads (*cataste*) without telling me any thing about it, and upon payment, chose to keep back ten lire, which he said he should

* Macchiavel's villa at present in the possession of the family Rangoni of Modena, who inherited it, is not far distant from the small town of S. Casciano, through the middle of which the road, which leads from Florence to Rome, passes.

† He means to speak of his prison, where, according to Busini, he suffered four chastisements of the rope.

‡ We have already seen that even the author is of opinion that this wood is allegorical.

have received from me four years ago when he beat me at Gleek (*cricca*) in the house of Anthony Guicciardini.—I began to play the devil, chose to accuse the carrier who had gone for them, of being a thief, when G. Macchiavel became the mediator, and settled the dispute. Baptist Guicciardini*, Philip Ginori, Thomas Del Bene, and certain other citizens, whenever the north-wind blew, took each of them a load from me. I promised it to all, and sent a load thereof to Thomas, half of which he sent to Florence, because his wife, his daughter, and his boys were there to receive it, who looked like Gaburro†, when, with those lads of his, he baits an ox on the Thursday—Seeing that I had no profit, I told the others that I had no more wood, and all have been very angry at this, and particularly Baptist, who numbers this amongst the other misfortunes of the state.

Upon leaving the wood, I go to a fountain, and hence into an aviary with a book under my arm, either Dante, or Petrarch, or one of those lesser poets, such as Tibullus, Ovid, and such like. I read of their amorous passions, and their loves, remember my own, and enjoy for a time this reflection, when I transfer myself to the inn upon the road, speak to those who pass by, ask the news of their native places, hear many things, remark the various tastes and different fancies which prevail amongst mankind.

In the meantime the dinner-hour arrives, where with my companions I eat of that food, which this poor villa of mine, and slender patrimony afford; and when I have eaten, I return to the inn: here I generally find the landlord, a sportsman, a miller, and two bakers (*fornaciai*.) With these persons I put myself upon an equality (*m'ingagliofo‡*) the whole day, playing

* Baptist Guicciardini was mayor of Florence in the year 1512.—Ammirato.

† The name of a butcher probably, who was at that time known in Florence or S. Casciano.

‡ A verb to be added to the vocabulary. It would appear to indicate feigning poverty to place ourselves on an equality with those who are poor. See the words *gaglioflaggine*, *gaglioofferia*, &c.

at gleek, at tric-trac, in which a thousand little contentions arise, and a thousand injurious words are exchanged, and most frequently we fight about a farthing, and we are heard shouting nevertheless as far as San Casciano. Thus ingulphed in this meanness, I conceal my brains (*traggio il cervello di muffa* *), and vent my passion against the malignity of this my fortune, content, indeed, that she tread upon me in this manner, in order to see if she be ashamed of it †.

When the evening comes on I retire into my house, and enter my study, take off my country clothes, full of dirt and mire, put on gentlemanly and curial attire ; and, thus clothed, I go to the ancient courts of men of old, where being received amorously by them, I feed of that food which alone is mine, and for which I was born ; where I am not ashamed to speak with them, to ask the motive of their actions, and for four hours I feel no ennui, I forget every sorrow, poverty neither frights, nor death disheartens, me. I transfer myself entirely to them, and as Dante says, *that there never was a science which retained not the man who understood it*, I have noted whatever I have found to be excellent from my conversation with them, and have composed a work *De Principatibus*, where I enter as deeply as possible into the contemplation of this subject, disputing what government means, of what kinds they are, how they are to be acquired, maintained, how they are lost ; and if any caprice or whim (*ghiribizzo*) of mine ever please you, this ought not to displease you.—And it ought to be acceptable to a prince, particularly to a new one, and I, consequently, address it to the magnificent Julius ‡. Philip Casavecchia has seen it;

* *Venir la muffa*, &c., is said of falling into a passion at the insolence of others : here the phrase is put in the contrary sense.

† And, indeed, if we consider the importance of the offices held by Macchiavel, the embassies, above all, on which he was employed, and his preponderance in the councils of the republic, we cannot do less than consider him as one of the greatest examples of the injustice and of the inconstancy of fortune.

‡ After the death of Lorenzo the old and the magnificent, this Julius, who is also named the magnificent, is the best of the remains of all that family.

he can give you an account, in part, of the matter itself; of the arguments held with him, although I am continuing to augment and to purify it.

You wish, illustrious ambassador, that I should abandon this life, and come to enjoy with you, yours.—I will do it in any way, but what retains me now, are certain affairs which I shall have finished within six weeks. What makes me hesitate is, that the Soderini being there, I should be obliged, by coming, to visit and speak with them. I should doubt whether upon my return I should alight at my own house, or that of the sheriff; because, although this state may have firm foundations, and great security, it is still new, and, consequently, suspicious; nor are there wanting busy-bodies (*saccenti*) who, in order to appear as Paul Bertini, would put others to sale, and leave me to reflect upon it. I beseech of you to spare me this fear, and I will come to see you, by all means, within the time I have said:

I have been arguing with Philip* about this little work of mine, whether it be better to give it, or not, to the world; if it be proper to give it, I will either bring it you myself or send it to you. And if I do not give it, I doubt whether it be ever read by Julius, and this Ardinghelli† would reap the honour of this my last labour. Necessity would oblige me to give it, because I am consuming myself (*mi logoro*), and cannot remain long thus without becoming contemptible through poverty.

* It appears that he wishes to speak of Philip Strozzi, a very great friend of Francis Vettori, who was so much so, that, after the violent death of Philip, Francis never more *left the house alive*. And it may be suspected that he speaks of him and no other, from seeing that the book of the *Principe* was afterwards addressed to Lorenzo de Medicis, Duke of Urbino, a brother-in-law and great confidant of Strozzi: so that when Florence was governed by Lorenzo, the historians say that Philip was considered as if he governed himself. Others think it may be Philip Casavecchia.

† After employing all possible diligence we have not been able to discover who this Ardinghelli was, who appears, however, to have been a domestic of Julius, by whose counsels he was guided. There was Nicholas Ardinghelli in the Farnese house, in the year 1540, who was afterwards made Bishop of Fos-sombrone and Cardinal.

Moreover I would wish that these Signiors Medicis would begin to make use of me, even should they commence with making me throw a stone; because, if I did not afterwards gain them, I should complain of myself. And by this production, should it ever be read, it would be seen that during the fifteen years that I have been studying the art of government, I have neither slumbered over nor played with it*, and every one ought to avail himself of a man who became full of experience at the expense of others. Of my faith, too, no doubt ought to be entertained, because having always observed good faith, I ought not to learn at present to break it; and the man, who has been faithful and good for forty-three years of his life, which is my age, is not able to change his nature, and my poverty is a sufficient testimony of my loyalty and goodness. I wish therefore that you would write to me your opinions upon this subject, and to your notice I recommend myself. Farewell. Sis felix.

NICHOLAS MACCHIAVEL.

10th Day of December, 1513.

* Two of his opinions alone prove the felicity and depth with which he considered matters. He was wont to say to Friar Jerome that he had seen all unarmed prophets get off badly, *che tutti i profeti non armati li avea visti capitare male*, and of friendship with France—that her good fortune had made her lose the half of the state; the bad would have made her lose her liberty, *che la buona fortuna di essa aveva fatto perdere la metà dello stato, la cattiva avrebbe fatto perdere la libertà.*

THE END.



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